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BLACK JAMAICA

A STUDY IN EVOLUTION

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BLACK JAMAICA

A STUDY IN EVOLUTION

BY

W. P. LIVINGSTONE

SECOND EDITION

 LONDON

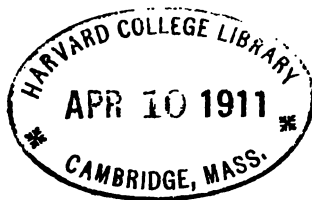
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PREFACE

THE following work is the outcome of ten years' careful study of the social and economic circumstances of Jamaica. It is sent out with the three-fold object of revealing to the world the negro as he really is and the potentialities of his nature ; of throwing some light on what is called the West Indian question, now so much discussed and so strangely misapprehended ; and of making clear to the inhabitants of the temperate zone the special conditions that govern both white and black existence in the tropics. It may be well to mention that the book was completed before Mr. Kidd's 'Social Evolution' was read, and before 'The Control of the Tropics' was published. With the main conclusions in these volumes most thoughtful observers in the tropics will agree.

Preface

The photographs reproduced illustrate three great stages in the history of the negro race. Those of African hunters and Jamaican ex-slaves were kindly supplied by Dr. Johnston, author of 'Reality or Romance in South Central Africa.'

W. P. L.

JAMAICA,
October, 1899.

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BLACK JAMAICA



CHAPTER I.

THE NEGRO AND HIS EMPIRE.

THE negro has never counted for much in the world. He has met the fate common to persons born with some physical defect ; their presence is tolerated and even excites a compassionate interest, but they are not considered in the general ordering of life. Science has not paid him much attention ; he scarcely occupies a place in the record of human development, and his value as a witness for the scheme of evolution is unknown. Almost all the literature dealing with him is dominated by prejudice or ignorance ; there is indeed no sadder literature in our language. At present the tendency is to regard him as a terminal point among the

projections of the higher species. It is held that he is destitute of initiative and incapable of social advancement, and the fact that he has never risen to any great attainment, never founded an empire, or built a city, or elaborated an art, is pointed to in corroboration. The claim of the philanthropist, that he is fundamentally equal with the white man, is denied. It is alleged that there is an inherent antipathy between the two races, and that it is hopeless to expect them ever to live side by side on equal terms. Those who entertain such a belief cannot avoid the conclusion to which it leads. It implies that there was more justification for the system of slavery in the past than has been allowed. It must also establish ground for the special treatment of the negro in the future.

The time has now arrived when this question should receive some serious consideration. On all hands difficulties are springing up in connection with the race. The situation in the United States is full of menace to the peace and prosperity of that country. Africa is being opened out, and millions of negroes are being brought within the pale of the higher civilization. It is becoming more and more impera-

tive for statesmen to possess data which will enable them to act aright in their dealings with this enormous mass of black humanity. It is equally necessary for the missionary Churches to know whether they are building on the sand or on the rock. If it can be demonstrated that the negro is capable of adapting himself to the requirements of modern conditions, and that he has the aspiration and energy to impel him along distinct lines of national progress, the general outlook will be greatly simplified. If, on the other hand, the belief referred to can be substantiated—if it is impossible for him to rise by his own effort—our estimate of the situation must be revised, and a definite policy adopted in correspondence with that knowledge. The matter is one in which the British people have a special interest. Within the Empire there are many negro communities in various stages of advancement. They are the objects of much vague sentiment and distant benevolence, but the practical problems involved in their existence are no better understood now than they were a century ago. Their successive administrators seldom come into real touch and sympathy with them. They are, on the whole, governed for good, with the strength

of might and the impartiality of justice ; but there is no broad philosophical vision of the responsibility incurred, no settled conviction as to the procedure that should be adopted. The attitude assumed is that of a well-meaning but somewhat careless guardian who is unwilling to do anything except under the pressure of a crisis. The explanation of this position will be found in the lack of precise knowledge of the negro and his racial capabilities. In the work of missionaries and explorers there are ample materials for judging him as he appears to the passing observer in his own domain, uninfluenced by contact with outside forces. These are of value as a contribution to the natural history of savage man, but they tell us nothing of the capacity of the race to grow. No proper opportunity for obtaining evidence in this direction has yet been afforded in Africa itself. The results in the United States have been frequently appealed to. There we find a population of negroes who have been in contact with civilization for a considerable period, first as hereditary bondsmen, and then as free subjects. They are, however, domiciled in the midst of a jealous and progressive people, openly

hostile to their social and political advancement. Their close and bitter association with this community has compelled them to make forced marches towards a higher state of efficiency, but their achievements, although remarkable, are not such as can be unreservedly accepted as testimony in an enquiry into the possibilities of the race. They can only be regarded as the superficial fruit of a hurried and unnatural process of growth. There is nothing to show that they mark a change in the elementary character of the race. The only portion of the globe where light is to be obtained on the subject at present is the West Indies. Here, in the British colonies, exist the clues which, if carefully studied, may lead to the determination of the points at issue. It is sixty years since freedom was conceded to the negroes, and in the interval they have had a fair opportunity to evolve into a higher national type. The government has been in the hands of the whites, and the blacks have enjoyed a liberty of thought and action, a security from disturbing influences, and a measure of equality with the superior race, which they have never possessed elsewhere for the same length of time. Jamaica may

be taken as the best type of the whole. Some of the other colonies may exhibit greater progress in certain aspects of life, the remainder may be more backward, but in none is there so complete a manifestation of all the phenomena associated with the development and civilization of a people.

The enquiry, it should be understood, is into the character of the negro. There is a large class in the colony of mixed origin, who range in colour from a light chocolate to pallid white. The habit of the outside world is to classify all degrees under the specific name of negro. In the United States this word is applied to persons who have scarcely any affinity with the African. But all who possess negro blood are not negroes. In Jamaica the right distinction is made and adhered to by all concerned. The half-castes and lighter breeds are designated the "coloured" class, in opposition to the two original types of black and white. The latter are root-stock, and possess all the fundamental virtues of virgin races; the others are hybrids, the Eurasians of the West Indies, the result, to a large extent, of illegitimate union. These have no more right

to be grouped with the negro than they have to be ranked with the white. As a matter of fact, the majority are physiologically nearer the white than the black, and the tendency is towards the elimination of the darker strains. They are, however, of as different an order from the parent white as they are from the parent negro. They are a compound of both; the intelligence of the one meets and amalgamates with the animalism of the other, producing a strange nature, the good in which is perpetually reaching forward to higher things, and the evil, like an unseen hand, perpetually dragging it back to savagery. In character, in morality, in aspiration, they differ from the pure negro; and in the interests of both the differentiation should always be made. The loose nomenclature which prevails has frequently injured the reputation of the negro; he has been made responsible for faults of which he is not guilty, and for movements and deeds in which he has taken no part. It is with him alone that this study is concerned, and the presence of the alien mixture is not considered, except as an incidental factor influencing his development.

The negroes are not, of course, aboriginal

in Jamaica The aborigines were exterminated by the Spanish—though there is evidence that their blood still obscurely persists in some remote districts among the negroes—and the British imported slave labour to make possible their own tenure of the land. But the climate is identical with that of tropical Africa, and though their roots strike deep into the far past, and into other soil, the negroes may for all ordinary purposes be considered an indigenous people. To understand their recent career in the island some reference is necessary to their origin, and the physical conditions that have surrounded and acted upon them since. The subject is one of deep and wide interest, but only an outline of the argument can be given here. The presumption is, that when man, as we know him, appeared on the earth, he was a denizen of the tropics and a negro. Through the operation of forces, the character of which is not yet exactly known, the aboriginal home was broken up and the family separated. One portion remained in the same strip of globe; the other pushed on and found itself in a region of cold. Simple as the circumstance may seem, it determined the history of the world. The former remained in its

primitive state, the latter gradually evolved into the many higher forms that now exist. For the social advancement of man depends upon temperature. It will be observed that the march of civilization has taken place within the limits of the temperate zone, the conditions there, and the relations they bring about, being most favourable for the development of the qualities latent in his nature. It is the sphere where the strenuous process of evolution has gone on, and is still going on, in its highest and most energetic form. It is the masculine part of nature. On the other hand, the characteristic of the equatorial area is fecundity but not progress. It is the rich fount of life, but not the trainer and moulder of it. It is the feminine part of the earth's surface. Producing man, it supports him without exertion, and he remains in the infantile stage of human evolution. He has no struggle for existence, no ambition for attainment. This empire of the tropics is a marvellous thing. None can possibly realise it without coming under its power, and it is seldom adequately understood even then. It is the empire of heat, of perpetual holiday of the senses, of mental and physical enervation. The negro has always been sub-

ject to it ; he has never, in the mass, known any other condition. For all but a fraction of his racial existence he has been living in a swamp, heedless or ignorant of the rush of advancing nations on the highway. Waves of conquest have swept up to him, and receded, and left no trace. The light of civilization that has shone at the far edges of his dark domain has been like the light of the stars to him ; it has been something altogether beyond his daily life—remote, unfathomable. As he was at the outset, so he is now. Alone and voluntarily it is impossible for him to develop ; not from any inherent inability—for he started from the same point as the other member of the family, and is fundamentally equal to him in character—but simply because his environment has been too much for him. His fate makes it reasonable to suppose that, had a tropical temperature covered the entire surface of the globe, there would have been little or no human initiative, and none of the achievements of intellect and labour with which we are familiar. There is other evidence which leads to the same conclusion. In the course of ages the member of the human family who had gone abroad and risen to position and power returned to his

primeval home, or, in other words, the white re-entered the tropics. The effect upon him was exactly that witnessed in ordinary life when a wanderer comes back and settles in the village he has left. He insensibly picks up the old ways and the old lines of thought ; but he has an experience behind him which prevents him ever again looking with the same eye upon life. So it is with civilized man when he places himself among the powers and principalities of his native sphere. His nature responds to the sway of the ancient spell, and deep within him are stirred the long-lost instincts and impulses of the aboriginal time. The training and education of centuries constitute, as yet, but a small barrier to the modifying action of climate. In the hot, sensuous atmosphere, amidst everlasting beauty of form and colour, the issues haunting humanity elsewhere assume a less formidable shape. Social difficulties vanish ; conscience becomes more tolerant, and even the sting of sin loses its poignancy. Nothing can better exemplify this transformation than a reference to what takes place in a lower sphere. When clearings are made it becomes a continuous struggle to save them from being re-absorbed in the forest. No matter how wide

and effective the breach may be, the bush comes on, with slow and stealthy movement, creeping, and climbing, and clawing, invincible and omnivorous. The full pathos of the process may often be witnessed in the fate of sugar estates. One day there is an extensive tract given up to cheerful activity—acres of arrowy cane, a network of road threaded by converging teams, the air vibrating to the hum of grinding and the song of the field-gang. The next, the buildings are closed, the oxen sold, the overseers and labourers gone. In a few years the cane-fields are covered with prickly scrub, and the works are mounds of vegetation; the tall chimney, throttled by lianas, stands like a dead and branchless cieba, and over in the Great House rank tree-stems push through the rotting floors. In a few years more the masonry has crumbled in pieces, and the high jungle, silent, smiling, and lonely, is supreme.

In the same insidious, irresistible way the man of civilization becomes decivilized. A certain standard of efficiency may be kept up for a time, but the primal influences gradually penetrate his being, paralysing his springs of action, weakening his moral sensibility, and

obliterating all the finer attributes and graces that have crowned the centuries. The degeneration is so gradual that a colonist is usually unaware of it until he returns to his own land. Missionaries often discover then that they have deteriorated more than they were aware of. This change to a colder climate is absolutely necessary if vitality of body and mind is to be preserved unimpaired. Hence the wisdom of the Colonial Civil Service system, which permits of a periodical sojourn in the mother country. Those who do not, or who cannot, replenish their ethical resources in this way, draw upon a decreasing reserve. Each generation witnesses a further adaptation to environment, and if the process were to go on unchecked by external agency the time might arrive when the normal level of tropical existence would be reached. It could not, however, be the same kind of existence as before. As in the case of the wanderer of the illustration, there would be that behind which could never be forgotten. But so complete a reversion to savagery is the unlikeliest of things in these modern days. Contact with the area of education and progress is too common and insistent to allow of any great social relapse.

The vitalizing pressure of civilization is being felt more and more in every corner of the globe, and in a short time there will be no opportunity left upon it for man to reduce himself to his untamed condition. Here we have a key which may, if rightly handled, unlock most of the sociological difficulties of the tropics.

Man has been given climate as a tool with which to fashion his destiny. One branch of the human family has used it to good purpose; the other has not. Nature, however, is never balked in her purpose, and she works out the details of her great scheme in many ways. The task of uplifting the negro she has delegated to his more fortunate kin. In the early stages of the world the latter were not in a position ethically to accomplish this. When, ultimately, they sought the tropics, they themselves sank almost to the level of the brutes. Up to quite a recent period the moral law was left behind when the spring-belt of the world was crossed. Too many leave it behind them still. There was, therefore, some wisdom in the long neglect by nature of the dark-skinned section of her family. She waited until the other members had sufficiently developed and

prospered before she assigned them the duty of guardianship. There was little idea of duty, it is true, in the first rough handling accorded to the negro, but it prepared the way for a more rational treatment. When white and black met there was a descent of the one according to his moral instability, but there was also an ascent of the other. The same process is going on still, and the result demonstrates that the advancement of the negro is contingent on his association with the white race, and on the character of that race. Without the stimulus of this factor he cannot better himself. Its presence, in fact, is to him what the invigorating climate of the temperate regions is to the white—a necessary condition of progress. That he has not risen higher where he has been in contact with it has been due to the imperfection by which it is still characterised. There is appearing among the whites, however, a more disciplined and responsible spirit, and its successful persistence in some few cases indicates that the gravitation of environment may be resisted by the magnetism of will-power and soul-power. The hope is accordingly established that the more man develops within the zone of evolution the

better he will be fitted to live out of it. As the spiritual part of his being grows dominant, the physical brakes will slacken. The abler also will he be to affect the negro for good. In the meantime, the power of temperature to charm away the capacities of mind and body is almost invincible, and this fact is the basis on which all questions relating to the human occupancy of the tropics must be considered. For all practical purposes, we may conclude, in the light of our present knowledge, that voluntary progress in that region is impossible for man, white or black; that the status of the former can only be maintained by close intercourse with the authority and intelligence resident in the temperate region, and that the latter can only be uplifted by personal and sympathetic contact with the superior race. The native, in short, clings to the colonist, while the colonist in his turn, clings to the northern civilization, which runs, like a girdle of life, round the globe. Bearing these primary facts in mind, we shall proceed to examine the social phenomena connected with the sojourn of the negro in Jamaica.



GROUP OF GANGUEILIAN HUNTERS
(Interior of Africa).

Photo by Hon. Dr. Johnston.

CHAPTER II.

THE PASSING OF THE SLAVE.

THE negroes for Jamaica were procured on the west coast of Africa and came from a wide area in the interior. It is sometimes assumed that they were torn from an idyllic environment. In reality their lives were one long subjection to tribal law and the prey of untold terror and tragedy—the terror of sudden capture, the tragedy of slaughter or hopeless servitude to their kind. From this *régime*, however, they were transferred to one scarcely better. The method of transportation was inhuman in the extreme. So rapid has been the growth of humanitarian sentiment that it is almost impossible now to understand the state of mind which could tolerate such a traffic. But history simply reflects the current mode of looking at things. To read events aright one must regard them from the level of the period in which they have occurred. To judge the

sentiment and phenomena of any age by a later standard is to see them out of perspective. The commerce in black flesh seemed legitimate enough to those engaged in it, and to the nation behind them at the time. The negro was regarded as an inferior being created for the purpose of performing the menial work of the world. He was wild stock, and so was captured and sold. His labour was required mainly for the sugar-cane plantations, which were a natural product of the conditions then prevailing in the tropics. The white interest, resident and foreign, was small. There was risk both to life and capital in the cultivation, and it was only the hope of large compensating profits that made it possible at all. Centralisation of effort was inevitable. The growth of the cane and the production of the sugar and rum were carried on as one process, and the planters, as they were called, took upon themselves the dual function of farmer and manufacturer, a system which prevails to this day. The ship-loads of slaves discharged on the wharves were valued according to their qualifications. Each tribe possessed well-marked characteristics, and those with a reputation for docility and industry were naturally sought

after. In this way a certain process of selection was carried on, and tribal traits perpetuated. But the frequent replenishings of stock from other sources, the changes incident to a system according to which the labour was attached to the person and not to the soil, and the circumstances of their lives combined to produce, in time, an assimilation of all classes, to diminish the sense of tribe, and to create simply an amorphous and characterless mass in common and absolute subjection to the superior race. Mind, as well as body, was dark and enslaved. Beyond a mechanical appreciation of concrete objects within their range of vision they had no knowledge of the world around them. Their capacity for thought was only shaping in embryonic darkness, and they obeyed no higher laws than the instincts of their animal nature. They were absolutely devoid of a consciousness of moral responsibility. A rude assortment of ideas regarding supreme Good and Evil influences floated in vague confusion upon the surface of their understanding, but their conduct was dominated solely by the evil influences, of which Obi or Obeah was the chief. Obeahism runs like a black thread of mischief through

the known history of the race. It is the result of two conditions, an ignorant and superstitious receptivity on the one hand, and on the other, sufficient intelligence and cunning to take advantage of this quality. The Obeahman is any negro who gauges the situation and makes it his business to work on the fears of his fellows. He claims the possession of occult authority, and professes to have the power of taking or saving life, of causing or curing disease, of bringing ruin or creating prosperity, of discovering evil-doers or vindicating the innocent. His implements are a few odd scraps, such as cocks' feathers, rags, bones, bits of earth from graves, and so on. The incantations with which he accompanies his operations are merely a mumble of improvised jargon. His real advantage in the days of slavery lay in his knowledge and use of poisonous plants. Poisoning does not now enter into his practices to any extent, but the fear he inspires among the ignorant is intense, and the fact that he has turned his attention to particular persons is often sufficient to deprive them of reason. Obeahism is a superstition at once simple, foolish, and terrible, still vigorous, but in former times as powerful

an agent as slavery itself in keeping the nature debased. Such were the slaves at the outset of their domiciliation in the island.

The character of the social pressure to which they were subjected was not fitted to improve them to any appreciable extent. Owners who resided on their estates usually looked well after them, and many therefore were tolerably comfortable. One sometimes comes across an aged survivor of this class, whose thoughts go back with regret to those days, in the belief that he was better off then than he has ever been since. In such cases their lot was undoubtedly happier than that of the workers at that time and long afterwards in many English factories and coal-mines. But the majority of owners were absentees who assigned their authority to attorneys and managers, the actual control being usually in the hands of overseers, who were young men from the United Kingdom. Removed from the high standard and restraints of northern life, under a hot sun, with unlimited opportunity of indulging their baser passions, the best of the latter became demoralised. As many as ninety per cent. succumbed to the combined effects of impure habits and unwhole-

some surroundings. They possessed supreme power, and the lower they sank, the worse, naturally, it became for the slaves. The system in general was loose and vicious even for those days. The theory of the slave-trader was carried to its logical issue by the slave-driver. He treated his slaves as stock. He harnessed them, and beat them, amused himself with them, and sometimes shot them when they turned upon him; but he never allowed that they were human beings like himself. In one respect, however, his practice never corresponded to his belief. This was in regard to sexual union. The women had no personal rights; they were at the command of any white man who looked upon them. Overseers were not permitted to marry; they were expected to keep concubines. There was, in fine, no place for marriage in the slave *régime*, only for breeding. How thoroughly the practice was carried out the population to-day bears living witness. Such a system not only intensified the animal propensities of the slaves, but it grafted new defects on their nature. At that time they were specially imitative, but lacked the faculty of discernment; and they copied the vices of their superiors because they

were more apparent and easier to appropriate than the virtues. Very few influences of an educative nature bore upon them. The larger proportion of men, women, and children were predial workers, that is, workers on the land, whose acts were automatic and incapable of stimulating the development of any quality. They were required to cultivate provision grounds, but the objects of culture were few and simple. These they retained for their own use, or sold to their masters, or in the markets. For this purpose they were usually allowed the whole of Sunday. Others who evinced special aptitude were engaged about the works, and were able to pick up some knowledge of the elements of handicraft from the competent hands employed. There was also a large number of domestics, and these received an additional polish from their connection with the Great House, but in reality their racial distance from those in the field was but a step. Among all grades there were favourite negroes who received a measure of education and training. There was, however, no general definite force operating in this direction. Neither religious nor secular instruction was deemed the prerogative of the

slave. The Church of England was established in the colony, but it existed solely for the convenience of the planters, and its clergymen acquiesced in the assumption that there was no spiritual part in the negroes to be attended to or developed. After completing their marketing on Sunday the latter gave themselves over to sensual enjoyment. The policy of their owners was simply to extract from them the utmost amount of physical labour consistent with their maintenance in prime condition. Anything beyond that, involving trouble or expense or drafts on sentiment, did not, they considered, come within the scope of their obligations. Making every allowance for their position, it was obvious that their sagacity was at fault. A more liberal treatment would have made their task of management lighter, and furnished less cause for the agitation which the continuation of such conditions was bound eventually to bring. If they had placed the slaves in a position more analogous to that since occupied by the East Indian coolies, they might have at least minimised the effect of the subsequent dislocation. The negroes had lived for unknown centuries an irresponsible and irregular life in a limitless region of bush. All

at once they were put to methodical tasks in circumscribed cane-fields, and kept there from sunrise to sunset, and often, when the moon shone at the full, far into the night. For any departure from the prescribed groove, or at any whim of their masters, they were liable to barbarous punishment. White men have gone mad under less provocation, and it was not surprising that at intervals the slaves broke out of hand and ran a short career of savagery and destruction. At first there was no intelligible meaning in these outbreaks; the iteration of labour and the brutalities practised upon them rendered their lives unendurable and made them crave for relief or revenge. The sympathy of the outside world went of course to the owners; there were few in those days who saw in what took place the best evidence that the slaves were made of ordinary human stuff. Thus for generations the subject population was shut out from all ameliorative agencies, and formed a huge soulless mass, in which all the forces of barbarism had free room to play and develop.

In course of time several minor influences began to open their eyes, to quicken their thoughts, and to stir their desires. Those in the households could not but profit by their con-

stant association with the superior race. No reserve was placed on conversation because of their presence, and they picked up many significant facts which gradually found their way down to the mass of the people. Some who had earned the favour of their masters, and others from various causes, were set free, and these settled in the towns and learned things of which before they had been ignorant. They, likewise, passed their knowledge on, and it became the possession of the many. The Maroons, too, were a perpetual object-lesson to the toilers in the cane-fields. They were originally slaves who had escaped from the custody of the Spanish colonists, or were released when the latter left the island, and who had established themselves in the remote mountain regions. Joined subsequently by others from the English estates they grew into a formidable body of black guerillas, who made frequent raids into the lowlands, destroying property and carrying away spoil. The slaves saw that they were men like themselves, and the realisation of the gulf between them imparted an added bitterness to their lot. Again, there was growing up a large mixed class, with sharper wits and keener sensibilities,

whose superficial superiority was a source of dissatisfaction to them. In one way or another, then, the darkness that covered their natures was being dispelled, and their ideas of the world and the circumstances of life widened. Gradually there came and dwelt with them a sense of wrong, a consciousness that they were occupying an anomalous position. Dim, large ideas of what was taking place in other spheres stole into their minds. It was towards the end of the eighteenth century. Liberty was in the air, and even they responded to its magnetic influence. Hayti was not many leagues distant, and the knowledge of the struggle going on there could not be kept from them. It changed their dark aspirations into vivid visions of freedom, and again and again they broke out in insurrection against the constituted order of things. Not, however, until the missionary came into the field did the proper liberation of their mind and body begin. (It was Christianity, not civilization, that stepped in and disestablished the slave system. Civilization then and for long afterwards cared nothing for the negro. And it was the evangelical section of the Christian community which accomplished the work.) Efforts were made

by missionary societies in England to plant their agents in the island. The attempt was disallowed by the slave-owners, and the Church and Legislature supported them. It was persisted in. The planters organised and carried out a plan of active persecution designed to discourage and stamp out the movement. The situation bore a close analogy to that in the early days of the Christian era, and the result was the same. Opposition became a soil in which grew success and progress. It was the old conflict between conservatism and liberalism, between egoism and altruism. The antagonism of the owners to missions was nothing but a confession that the slaves were capable of mental and moral improvement, and that if they were enlightened they would prove less reconciled to their lot and more difficult to control. But the colonists have never been addicted to analysing their impressions or sitting in judgment on their motives ; and high temperature is not conducive to clearness and vigour of intellect. They now admitted, consciously or unconsciously, the full human character of the labour they employed. But as the evolution of the slaves implied, in their opinion, the devolution of the sugar industry, their self-interest came into operation,

and they were resolved to withstand any change in the old *régime*. It was the friction between them and the missionaries that furnished to the blacks the first real sparks of light by which they were able to reconstruct their view of existence and arrive at the real significance of things. There was scarcely one of them now who did not know he was a mere chattel and that his destiny was to be free. Towards the end, when the great system which governed their lives was breaking up, the planters themselves began to confess its unrighteousness and to acknowledge their responsibility. And then we find several owners manumitting their slaves, and others sending at their own cost to Scotland for religious instructors. Sooner or later the conscience of humanity makes itself heard. The movement of the world is upward.

How emancipation was consummated is matter of history. A system of apprenticeship was first arranged, six years for agricultural labourers, and four years for tradesmen and domestic servants, but the temper of the planters made it impossible, and the period was cut short without social results of any practical value having been secured. The advent of absolute freedom in 1838 was welcomed

by the negroes in the sanctuary and on the mountain-top. A few years before they had broken out in ungovernable excitement and rage, and destroyed property to the extent of half a million sterling. Now, in the possession of perfect liberty, they used their power to pray and to praise. History scarcely presents a more pathetic spectacle than that multitude of black slaves kneeling on the high eminences of the land, watching for the first gleam of the dawn that would reveal them to themselves and to the world as free men and women. If, however, the owners had been wrong in treating them as brute stock, the British public made a mistake in considering them fit to be ordinary subjects of the State. Throughout the agitation there had been no intention to provide for their future direction; the idea had been simply to give them their freedom at any cost. Nothing demonstrates more clearly that the character and position of the negroes were misunderstood. It had been impossible for them to make any racial progress during their period of bondage; what they were, as a whole, when the system began, they were when it ended. The long and severe servitude had not, it is true, been without its effect.

They had been familiarised with the habit of continuous labour. This was soon lost, as it usually is under present conditions in tropical countries, but it proved useful at the critical period of their history which immediately followed. They had been taught obedience and respect. These qualities are likelier to survive, and survived they have, even to the present day. Their environment was also less unpromising than the one from which they had been taken. The transfer had been for most a step towards a higher state of existence. If their bodily subjection had continued, their minds at least had latterly been able to start on a course of enfranchisement. They had been undergoing an apprenticeship to the art of independent living. The value of the system in these directions is frequently overlooked by those who can see nothing but the horrors of the middle passage and hear only the sound of the overseer's lash. But when all is said, it must be admitted that they exhibited no improvement in the mass and as a race. The black man, as he stood facing the white man on the eve of emancipation, was a child, ignorant, helpless, irresponsible. His mind was dark and stagnant, moving, if at all, to the

blind impulses of superstition and fear. His only guides were his impulses, and these he followed instinctively like the brutes. His real motive for desiring freedom was not an aspiration to a higher life, but simply a wish to escape the tedium of discipline and control, and to live at will. It could not be otherwise. He was the inheritor of nothing but ages of barbaric character; he was still raw, primitive man. Three hundred thousand of these semi-savages were to take their places side by side with a handful of educated colonists. Were they to do this without any intermediate stage of preparation? It was a perilous and illogical experiment; but it was tried, and it was not the planters but the people of Britain who were responsible. This was the fundamental error which led up to all the misery and misconception that have since been suffered by the race. When freedom was proclaimed, Britain imagined that its work was accomplished. But it was the body only that had been completely emancipated—the mind was still more or less a slave. There was another duty to be performed, but it was shirked. It was right to remove all the physical disabilities hindering a free development of the race, but

measures should also have been taken to remove the moral and mental disabilities. Without these measures, the freed man was bound to remain at the point where the bondman left off, save for any voluntary effort that might be made by philanthropists. There should have been a prolonged process of careful manumission, associated with religious and secular education and social and industrial legislation ; not as a compromise in the interests of the planters, but with the object of grounding the negroes in the elementary principles of civilization. The latter, it may be said, would not have submitted to it. But they submitted to apprenticeship, and it was only the folly of the owners which made it unworkable. Had they been treated with kindness and justice they would have submitted to anything. The planters could also have been disarmed and pressed into the service of humanity. They had been wrong in their methods, they were prejudiced and conservative ; but it was to their advantage to avoid the immediate disturbance created by emancipation, and had they been dealt with on a basis of conciliation a fairly satisfactory arrangement might have been arrived at:

What was wanted was a strong, wise, clear-cut Imperial policy which would have entrusted them with the negroes under proper supervision and control, as they are now entrusted with the coolies, a policy which would have enabled them to reconstruct the foundations of their industry, and meet, with better success, the changing conditions abroad. But they were antagonised and ignored. They were on the losing side and were given no quarter. Accordingly they gave none. Each party forced the other into an attitude of extreme opposition, which has been maintained to the present day, and has coloured all the relations of the two races. Britain took the other and more convenient course. It simply left both negroes and planters to themselves. Having knocked off the shackles of the slaves and turned them adrift with a reprieve in their hands, it imagined the whole business was over, and forthwith dismissed them from its mind.

For over a century the colony had enjoyed a political Constitution, which the privileges that had been arrogated in the face of continuous opposition from the Crown had made almost autonomous. The Legislature, as a whole, possessed supreme authority and in-

fluence, and the entire future of the country was contingent on the action it would take. The Governor, as the Imperial representative and executive head, did what he could. In a Proclamation he gave the people joy of their great blessing. They were free, he said, but freedom involved its own responsibilities. They would require to depend on their personal exertions for a livelihood, either on whatever land they could c. or at paid work on the estates. It was the interest of the planter to treat them fairly, and it was their interest to be civil, respectful, and industrious. He bade them be honest to all men, and kind to their wives and children, sparing the former from the heavy field labour and sending the latter to school and church. The people of Britain had paid a large price for their liberty—they must show themselves worthy of the sacrifice. It was a simple address, but it had the desired effect on their simple minds, which could only appreciate simple intentions and simple methods. The Governor was assisted by a nominated Council, or upper Chamber, but the real force in the administration was the representative element, the House of Assembly, which was composed

of the planters and their associates. It was an intensely conservative body, the defender of vested interests, the champion of sugar, the contemptuous antagonist of the new sentiment. Bitterly resenting the interference of the Home Government, and smarting under the humiliation of defeat, it refused to recognise any duty to be performed towards the new-born race. There had, it considered, been too much philanthropic legislation already. The slaves had been released in a panic of national self-righteousness, and were now in a state superior to their attainments. So it, too, drew apart, and left the negroes to themselves. There was great uncertainty for a time. The economic system of the island was out of joint. Without compulsory labour the planters were placed at a temporary disadvantage in carrying out their industry upon which depended not only their own fortunes but the fortunes of the colony. The old conditions collapsed, and it was then found that the financial basis was also unsound. The splendour had been superficial and deceptive. The money voted in compensation went to the mortgagees of the estates, or melted away in a hundred other directions. Many planters were unable to recover, and retired

from the field. Others, less embarrassed with debt, continued in the hope of a better future. Had they been wise, they could even then have established satisfactory relations with their former slaves. But the whole proceedings were repugnant to their education and interest, and personal feeling ran so high that it was usually impossible to arrive at an understanding. The negroes were often driven off the plantations by the exorbitant charges for rent, the low prices offered for labour, and petty persecution. For mud hovels the sum of six shillings and eightpence per week for each inmate over ten years of age was not an uncommon extortion. Two factors, however, operated to reduce the chaos to some semblance of order—the necessity for the negroes providing for their daily needs, and the habit of work acquired under the slave *régime*. Many, accordingly, pressed by circumstances, returned to the estates, but these were, as a rule, of the lower and less governable type. Contact with this class was not likely to heal the distemper of the whites, and the friction and trouble between the two races continued. The mass of the population, however, passed beyond

immediate vision, moving into the bush and up into the mountains, as far as possible from the scene of their shame, and forming settlements, which are the villages and towns of to-day. At work among them everywhere were the missionaries. Still opposed and restricted in their efforts, they were, nevertheless, at this transition period the only agency for good in the island. They bought land and resold or rented it in small lots to the people. They advanced them money, they built schools and churches, they constructed roads. The people in turn looked upon them as their saviours, trusted them, and responded to their demands. These men in fact performed all the duties which should have been discharged by the Government, and it was mainly due to their exertions and management that in a short time the people were settled in orderly and permanent occupations.

Thus the great stream, which had hitherto borne along in its powerful current all the elements within the colony, divided ; one branch making its way over a rocky, uncertain, and ever-narrowing course, the other losing itself in a wide-spreading wilderness, both to meet and mingle, after many years, in a tragic and unforgettable manner.

CHAPTER III.

NEGLECT AND STAGNATION.

(1838-1865.)

THE planters continued to sow the wind. It was not emancipation which ruined them, though the outside world still believes that it did. Emancipation struck into a movement that had been going on for a long series of years. Prices were falling from increased production elsewhere, and the industry was gradually becoming less profitable. Emancipation was only an incident, one increasing the tendency of the movement perhaps, but not the cause of it. It was the planters who ruined themselves. They would not adapt their ideas and methods to the changing conditions around them; the world moved, but they stood still. It seemed to be their aim to stereotype their industry, to make it the one thing not subject to the laws that govern human activity. They had alienated the

natural supply of labour. Instead of retrieving their action by cheapening production and reducing expenses of administration, they sought to maintain the status to which they had been habituated. The Legislature came to their aid, and made provision for the importation of coolies from the East Indies. Their position with regard to labour now became exactly similar to what it had been prior to emancipation. There was little difference between the total cost of slave labour and the price of coolie labour. But the system was badly managed, and did not succeed so well as it might have done, though it kept many of the estates alive. There was still an opportunity for looking ahead, for studying the signs of the times, and for placing affairs on a sound business basis by the introduction of better and more economical methods of culture and manufacture. But the glamour of the wasteful past lay upon them and they did nothing. The development of British fiscal policy from protection to free trade brought about the reduction and abolition of the preferential duty on colonial sugar, and both the slave-grown and the free-grown product were admitted into the United Kingdom on the same terms. The

equalisation of the duties, however, might have been as little a mortal blow as the manumission of the slaves. Had the planters adopted new methods, and called courage and enterprise to their aid, they would have survived both. But they were themselves slaves to tradition, habit, and environment, and they never summoned up the energy sufficient to master their circumstances. It was a policy of drift, and it drifted them, one after the other, into ruin. The abandonment of so many centres of the staple production naturally injured the economic position of the colony, and indirectly affected the entire population. But the chief influences now bearing on the blacks lay massed in the Legislature. Defeated in the open, the white colonists retired to their stronghold, and prepared to make a bitter last stand. History demonstrates that they never once had a right conception of their responsibilities. They legislated for their own class, ignoring the general interests of the island and the necessity for elevating the semi-savage humanity burrowing in the interior. No facilities, other than those connected with the estates, were provided for carrying on the industrial work of the colony. There were few highways, and

these were often little better than river-courses. Public institutions were inefficient ; their administration was corrupt. By-and-by the representatives of other interests and other classes began to appear in the Assembly, and brought with them more generous views. Again came the clash of antagonistic principles ; the conflict between Liberalism and Conservatism was renewed on higher issues, and there ensued a political struggle which is one of the most remarkable in the history of Constitutional Government. We are not writing an account of it, but merely indicating its existence as a factor affecting the negro race. It is sufficient to say that there was constant controversy with the Home Government, with disagreements between the Legislative Council and the House of Assembly, and in every branch of the public service dissensions, intrigues, and brawls.

Thus left alone, the negroes became quietly established on the soil, and had an opportunity of showing what use they would make of their liberty. They were now citizens of the State, as well as free personal agents. Both capacities involved new obligations, slight, it is true, but far in advance of what they had been accus-

tomed to perform. Hitherto they had been housed, and fed, and physicked, and had had no occasion to exercise forethought. Now, it was necessary for them to call into use all their faculties, to think of the morrow, to pay rent and taxes, to provide for their children. The result proved that the few who had received rational treatment as slaves occupied the highest racial level. Thrifty and industrious, they were able to buy land and to cultivate it, and to erect decent homes for their families. They were loyal to the authorities, and performed with careful and intelligent exactness all the duties of their position. Slavery they saw in its true light, and hated it as much as those who had greater cause, but they knew that real freedom would not be obtained by returning to the conditions of Africa. The one sure expedient was to widen the social distance between the past and the present. Here, already, therefore, was the nucleus of a self-respecting yeoman class emerging out of the raw mass of barbarism. It is this mass, however, with which we have mainly to do at present. The great majority of those who composed it were still in a condition of savagery. They did not appreciate their position and opportunities; they had no

idea of the dignity and usefulness of life. Many refused to work because, in their ignorance, they believed that freedom meant complete immunity from the burdens of existence. Morally, intellectually, and industrially, they were children, and children who had been steeped in a vicious atmosphere. They had gained certain advantages from the discipline through which they had passed, but these were counterbalanced by the addition to their own faults and superstitions of a number of minor habits, the result of association with the lowest side of white civilization. What would have been their ultimate fate had they been left to this white civilization, it is difficult to say. But as white Christianity had accepted the task of solving the slave problem, so it accepted the further task of educating and elevating the race. The missionaries were few in number, and it was impossible that they could cover the entire ground, but they reached a large proportion of the more intelligent. Everywhere congregations were formed, and all the regular routine of church life inaugurated. To every central organisation numerous out-stations were added, with the object of taking in as wide an area as possible. A minister would, therefore,

have a whole country-side, densely populated, under his charge. No estimate can be formed of the toil which these men imposed upon themselves in their endeavour to meet the wants of the situation. They became literally fathers to thousands, guiding and training the people in every department of life ; preaching, judging disputes, initiating penny banks and building societies, doctoring the sick, building, surveying, constructing roads—in short, discharging all the multifarious functions that fall to the lot of the pioneer missionary.

Their supreme aim was naturally to instruct the people in the elementary doctrines of religion, and their first care was to separate Sunday from the other days of the week. The old markets were abolished, and with them disappeared their attendant evils. The people went, instead, to the church. No doubt the character of the services appealed to their emotional nature, but they also entertained a feeling of gratitude and affection for the agency that had secured them their freedom. While, however, it was a simple matter to get them to church, it was difficult to effect a radical change in their character. They had but a dim and uncertain notion of the Supreme Being, their

relation to Him, and the practical obligations it involved. It was a new acquirement, and it lay floating on the surface of their nature, while beneath ran, unimpeded, the strong, black current of heathenism. What their mental darkness was cannot be realised. They had no consciousness of what we call sin, and had therefore no desire to escape from it. Morality was something beyond their comprehension. When they began their new life as a freed people, they did so on the lowest basis, practically on an animal basis. The relation of the sexes generally was simply that subsisting between the beasts. There were some whom circumstances had induced to marry; there were others who lived in a voluntary union as binding upon them as any legal ceremony could have made it, but the greater number knew and obeyed no other law than passion. The women were no more disposed to marry than the men. This was largely due to the relative position of the sexes. Both were on an equality. The women earned their own livelihood, and lived their own robust, independent life. There was no wooing, and winning, and permanent companionship thereafter; they gave themselves to each other as they pleased. To be

married was, to a woman, to become a slave, and slavery, with its dark associations, was as yet but a stone's throw in the past. She preferred her freedom, and accepted its greater responsibilities with equanimity. It was this unconscious sensuality which proved the greatest obstacle to the development of their character. Scarcely less powerful an evil was their superstition, with its correlatives—obeah-craft, poisoning, and mental paralysis. These two tendencies were part and parcel of that side of their nature which the missionaries believed it to be their first duty to reach and mould, and they accordingly devoted themselves mainly to the task of combating them, and installing in their stead a bias towards chastity, self-respect, and independence of mind. Recognising, however, that secular education must accompany religious instruction, as the essential antecedent of social advancement, they undertook also to compass this important work. Schools were attached to every church, and the children gathered in and taught. At first, assistance was given from the Imperial Exchequer in the shape of an annual grant, but the amount was too small to yield any useful result, and it was soon stopped. This was not surprising in view

of the attitude of the English towards the cause of elementary education in their own country, and of the waning public interest in the negroes. The Island Government then voted an annual sum of £3,000 for the same purpose ; but this, again, was too small, and distributed in too careless a manner to accomplish any substantial and lasting good. Assisted by friends in the United Kingdom, the missionaries also established institutions for the training of native teachers to supply their day-schools, as well as of catechists and pastors for the out-stations and new churches, and these became so many centres from which enlightenment radiated to all parts of the island. Despite this activity, however, only a fraction of the juvenile population could be reached, and thousands grew up in the bush as ignorant and undisciplined as if they had been living in the heart of Africa.

It was not within the province of the missionaries to direct the industrial activities of the people, but in the course of their normal work they took advantage of every opportunity to advise them upon the proper application of their time and energy. The majority of the agricultural class knew nothing of the art of cultivation, or of the possibilities of the soil, or

of foreign outlets for their products. Their system of culture was merely that of the slave period, with absolute licence added. They grew produce for their own needs, and a little over to sell in the local markets, in order to procure the means of paying taxes and providing clothing, and varying their ordinary articles of diet with a few simple accessories. It would have been useless to have grown more; the surplus would have been wasted. Their methods were crude in the extreme. Fire, the machette (a kind of cutlass), and the hoe were their sole implements. With the cutlass they cleared the loose bush from a patch of virgin land. With fire they swept it clean. They planted with the hoe, and in due season they reaped a liberal harvest. A second crop might be raised; but the land was sooner or later considered exhausted, and was then abandoned, and renting another patch further on, they repeated the same process there. Some of the missionaries, and particularly those attached to the Scottish stations, endeavoured to give their members direction on the subject, but they made no impression on the mass. The people, in fact, were satisfied, in the meantime, with the posi-

tion they had attained, and saw no visible reason for attempting more. In other spheres of labour the same spirit prevailed. The small number of artisans who had been employed on the estates established themselves in the centres, and, as they were fairly competent in the commoner kinds of craftsmanship, they did well. Work was abundant, and prices were good. Some received apprentices, and gave them a fair grounding in their respective trades. But the majority were negroes who bought a few tools, and, without any manual training or knowledge of principles, set up as master workmen. The results they turned out were of the poorest description. Outside the workshops of the ex-slaves, and the various public departments which employed black labour, the only educative agency was again the Church. The missionaries were constantly requiring the services of masons, carpenters, smiths, and other workmen, and as they generally planned and supervised their own undertakings, they were able, in an incidental way, to impart to those whom they employed some hints as to established rule and right execution. But no real general progress was made in handicraft during the years of neglect. At the end of the period,

negro industry, as a whole, was practically in the same position as it had been at the beginning.

At other points the missionaries endeavoured to touch and influence the lives of the people. They were the only agents of healing and right living who entered their homes. The dwellings were ordinarily of the most primitive character. The majority of the peasant class lived in one-roomed huts, constructed of bamboo wattles, interlaced, and smeared with mud, and roofed with grass or palm leaves or the trash of the sugar-cane. The inhabitants of the towns huddled together in small rooms in common yards, or in rude hovels on the outskirts. The furniture was in harmony with the building—mats or boxes or rough erections of wood for beds, a chair or two, a table, and a few other common necessities. Occasionally a sideboard with cheap ornaments could be observed. The cooking was performed outside in any shaded spot or under the nearest tree. Sanitation was almost unknown, and the chief towns were an abomination to every sense. In Kingston there was no general water supply, and the poor were often seen at the gutters in

the neighbourhood of the affluent whites, drinking the unclean refuse water that flowed from the baths and sinks. A medical system ought to have been a concomitant of emancipation. The necessity for it was obvious, and the attention of the Legislature was often directed to the matter. But nothing was done. The missionaries could come into contact with only a few of the diseased and suffering, and as a rule the sick lay uncared for, and died untended, save for the animal-like attentions of their kind. When advice was sought it was the obeahman, or the bush doctor, or some old woman of repute, that was consulted. The knowledge of medical herbs was common, and considerable use was made of these simple and often effective remedies. But the mortality of both old and young was beyond computation. As a result of their economic position their diet was of the simplest character. It consisted of yams, cocos, plantains, sweet potatoes, and cassava. The purchased articles were salt, flour, and salt fish. The well-to-do artisans and tradesmen added to these fish and fowl; beef, though cheap, was not generally consumed. The universal drink was water, and drunkenness was rare. In the matter of

dress considerable progress soon became visible. Still in childhood, they were naturally caught by the most obvious aspects of civilization, and, being seldom interfered with or directed by the whites, they were inclined to give rein to their desire. Their sense of harmony, however, was in its rudimentary stage, and the result was sometimes sufficiently *bizarre*. This was particularly the case on Sundays and holidays, when they arrayed themselves in costumes which excited the ridicule of the whites, and earned for the fashion the contemptuous designation of "monkey style." In the field their dress was of ordinary material, osnaburg or white drill and caps in the case of the men, printed cottons and bandanas in the case of the women. Very wisely the missionaries left this feature alone. It gave the people some incentive to work, it might call out habits of neatness and cleanliness, and it was infinitely better that they should go to this extreme than remain in the other. Other social qualities had not yet begun to develop themselves. Where there was frequent change of husband and wife, so-called, there could not be any common family interest. There was no community of property; each had separate

gardens and separate stocks of pigs and fowls. There was no co-operation, no mutual trust.

It was a short distance which they travelled as a whole during those early years, though, in the circumstances, a larger result was not to be expected. There had been a natural reaction. On escaping from the tension of slavery they were like prisoners after long incarceration, who are content for a time merely to revel in the sunshine. Able to do as they liked, and having no knowledge of a higher state, they glided into a simple, irresponsible, and self-indulgent existence. The forces counteracting the tendency to stagnation were few; what should have proved the chief coercive power was wholly absent. The Government should have directed their energies into a fresh and progressive course, and it might have worked wonders with so docile and pliable a race. But it ignored them absolutely. It took no trouble to train them in the duties of citizenship; it never made any attempt to convert them into a small proprietary, or to enlighten them on the subject of intensive farming, or to stop the desolating practice of bush-firing, or to induce them to diversify their products, or to open up

new markets ; it did not dream of taking the young vagrants of the country and educating them and turning them into decent and industrious artisans and cultivators. There was, of course, the indirect influence of humane men and women in the homes, stores, fields and workshops of town and country, but the only direct agency at work for good was the mission church. Upon the shoulders of the missionaries lay the entire burden of the negro. They alone were deliberately endeavouring to civilize him. It was a gigantic task for a handful of men, and they felt like children who endeavour with tiny spades to keep back the onflow of the ocean. It was little wonder that they sometimes experienced seasons of great depression, even of despair. They were, however, dealing with the mass, and while specific instances of failures were common, there was being laid, unseen, beneath the wide surface, a broad, if still thin, foundation of elementary character.

The outlines of three distinct conditions could now be traced among the general social phenomena prevailing in the island. The first was the relation of the negroes to the State. That they were in a civilized country was

evident from the claims of the tax collector, and the comparative order and security that reigned around them. Beyond that they knew nothing. They acquiesced without question in the arrangements by which they were governed, and thus confirmed the Legislature in its egoistic and autocratic procedure. The second condition was the character of the association which subsisted between the two races. The slave *régime* was dead, but its spirit haunted the island. The planters maintained their old proud attitude, refusing to acknowledge the new and higher status of the negro, and treating him in a manner which began to be keenly resented. Race prejudice was rapidly intensifying. The third condition was the economic position occupied by the people. This was frail and insecure, and liable to be affected by the slightest disturbance of established arrangements. Low prices, failing markets, droughts, hurricanes, epidemics, occurred from time to time, and any one of them was sufficient to weaken or remove altogether their normal means of subsistence. No material prosperity could be built upon so flimsy a basis. In the political, personal, and industrial spheres, therefore, there were elements of danger ; in the

political, that there might be abuse of power ; in the personal, that colour might widen the gulf between class and class ; and in the industrial, that a serious crisis might take place at any moment by the opposition of untoward circumstances.

CHAPTER IV.

TRAGEDY.

(1865.)

WE approach a period in the history of Jamaica which calls for clear vision and unbiassed judgment. It will have been gathered that the conditions lying at the foundation of the material prosperity of the country were fraught with ominous possibilities. Sugar and rum continued to be the staple productions and the principal articles of export; but prices kept on falling, and as the cost of production remained practically the same, the margin of profit constantly grew narrower, and in many cases disappeared altogether. The planters rejected the idea of alternative cultures, and were sugar planters to the last. Nothing was put in the place of the canes, and estate after estate was thrown up. The return of the fields to bush went on at a more rapid rate than the introduction of new cultivations, and it was plain that if the changing conditions were not

realised and provided against, the internal relations of the colony re-adjusted, and a fresh start made on a lower and cheaper level, the time would arrive when a serious dislocation would take place. How long it would have been before this eventuality would have occurred, it is impossible to determine. Several factors co-operated to bring about a general crisis before the economic situation fully developed. Chief of these was the conduct of the men at the head of affairs. The Legislature was still the last refuge of the Creole aristocracy, where inch by inch they fought the disintegrating forces at work among their interests. The liberal element was now present in larger proportion than before; but the planters and their friends were still in the majority. The black population could not be said to be represented. Theoretically, they were in a position of equality with the whites, but, practically, they had no voice in public affairs. The electoral qualification was so high that, at the election of members to the House of Assembly in 1863, there were only 1798 persons registered as electors out of a population of 441,000, and of these but 1482 exercised their privilege, the successful candidates being

returned by total votes varying from fourteen to thirty-nine. Legislation had always more or less relation to the interests of the dominant party. Of the great number of laws passed, scarcely one had reference to the mass of the people. It never seemed to occur to the members that this tax-paying class also required some attention and consideration. The language of debate in the House grew more violent, and the proceedings violated all the canons of constitutional procedure. Personal altercations took place, and missiles were flung. Revenue measures were thrown out, and a complete dead-lock in public business was not uncommon. On one occasion, when the Treasury was already bankrupt, the annual laws levying the import duties were allowed to expire, and Jamaica became a free port. The loss incurred from this cause alone was £130,000. The credit of the colony disappeared. All the public departments became demoralised. From the "House of the Forty Thieves," as the Assembly was termed, down to the smallest office, mismanagement, corruption, and jobbery were rampant. The Imperial Government forced on a slight reform of the constitution as a possible cure for all evils ; but

this could not exorcise the evil spirit within the Legislature, and the process of degeneration rapidly continued.

The political situation became the common talk of the country. Public questions were carried into the home circle and debated wherever men assembled. As in the time of slavery, the blacks heard what was said, and an uneasy feeling began to unsettle their minds. Their suspicion was set on flame by a casual remark in the course of the discussion which the state of affairs called forth. It had been stated that the island would do better if annexed to the United States. The idea was doubtless used by the colonists then, as it has been more than once since, as a means of drawing the attention of Britain to the condition of the island. But the bare thought of such a consummation struck the negroes with mortal fear. The suggestion passed from mouth to mouth. It became a proposition, a settled fact, and finally the belief was widely entertained that the Americans were preparing to take possession of the colony and to re-establish the slave system. Their excitement became intense. The whites were alarmed, and asserted that a rebellion was imminent.

They appealed to the Governor to have a sufficient force ready to meet emergencies. He complied with the request, but also took the more effectual course of issuing a Proclamation to calm the minds of the people. So great was their trust in the representative of Her Majesty that the fever of unrest subsided at once. But they had been roused from their apathy to a sense of strange possibilities. They were now watching, and listening, and waiting. Another terror came upon them, one which, this time, they were powerless to resist. Asiatic cholera, a disease hitherto unknown in the West Indies, passed through the insanitary land and struck down one out of every thirteen of the population. The people were still mourning their dead when it reappeared and gleaned the weak that had been left. Into the shadow cast by these visitations crept gradually the blackness of other calamities. A drought settled upon extensive districts of the country. Vegetation shrivelled up, the soil dried and cracked, stock died. The peasantry lost their standing crops of provisions, and were unable to plant again. Not having been taught any of the expedients by which civilized man contrives to tide over similar periods, they were unable to help them-

selves. They had no reserve resources to fall back upon. Widespread sickness and suffering followed, and deep despondency. The American Civil War broke out. The price of all imported food-stuffs rose; clothes were unpurchasable, and thousands of children, and even adults, went in rags or naked. Increased import duties were levied to provide the means of continuing the comedy of government, and then the middle classes began to experience privation. From economic impoverishment to public demoralisation was but a step. A spirit of unrest and lawlessness manifested itself, and crime increased. The unemployed became nomadic and carried their dissatisfaction and vices with them. The Churches lost in attendance, and their funds fell off, materially hastening the approaching crisis. The denomination most affected was the Baptist, which had now severed its connection with the Home Society, and was dependent on its own resources. It was, therefore, the Church most embarrassed. Its authorities naturally sympathised with the people and allowed themselves to animadvert freely on the conduct of the Government. One section of the body, which had not joined the

local union, existed as a sect of native Baptists, and was numerous in the eastern district of the island. It was a black Church with a crude polity, discipline, and teaching, struggling amidst a confused mass of African feeling and action. The negro pastors and leaders were incapable of judging aright the course of events, and their training induced them to attribute everything to the domination of the former slave-owners. They were the readiest to denounce the governing powers, and in the parish in which they mainly worked they gradually set flowing in the minds of the ignorant people a strong current of discontent. The same feeling, however, was growing up in other parts of the country, and even among the freehold settlers on the hills a vague dissatisfaction was beginning to show itself. The character of the best black men seemed to be deteriorating under the pressure of hunger, contumely, and neglect. The sharp racial and social contrasts could not but accentuate the common misery and oppression. Educated negroes had their painful experiences, and though the masses saw from a distance they felt not less keenly. Thousands of them walked regularly into market—ten, twenty, or thirty miles—carrying

their scanty load of produce for sale. They passed through the suburbs and streets, where lights shone in cottage and mansion, revealing scenes of comfort and gaiety, passed on to sleep until dawn in filthy yards or on open piazzas, lying side by side in all conditions of weather, less cared for and thought of than the least of domestic brutes. It was not strange if, in their mud hovels and before their desolated grounds, the recollection of all the brilliancy and affluence associated with the white race brought with it a bitter sense of inferiority and wrong. Everywhere, in fine, forces of one kind or another were at work destroying the happiness and prosperity of the colony.

It was generally recognised that the Legislature was the main cause of the country's ruin, and the liberal element in it at last turned from fighting with their colleagues and each other, and appealed to the people at large. In this way a public movement began. The intelligent coloured class, whom racial self-consciousness was also more and more embittering, became the most active propagandists. But many white Creoles, who saw the hopelessness of expecting the Legislature to amend its ways, frankly joined them. The great mass

of the blacks were at first simply spectators of the unfolding drama. They were not advanced enough to realise the efficacy of constitutional agitation, or to organise seriously for the accomplishment of a common end. As with all primitive peoples their methods are simple and direct, and when uninfluenced by superior minds, they follow their instincts. More than once we find them pursuing this child-like policy, and if the Government had been wise, it would have dealt with them specifically, in a patient and sympathetic spirit, and so nullified outside agitation. But an opposite course was taken. A large number, for instance, in one of the finest districts of the island, sent a petition to the Queen, pathetic in its entire trust and loyalty, telling her of the daily course of their lives, and stating that they were willing to work if only they could obtain land. The reply came through the Governor, and it merely directed them and their race to employ the means already in their possession, to work steadily and continuously for the planters, and to add prudence and thrift to their industry. This was giving them a stone when they asked for bread. It hardened their hearts, and they turned with increasing interest to listen to the agitators. Public

meetings were held. At these, demands for reform were formulated, and in the heat of the moment strong language was used. There was one man who developed into a kind of leader. He had been born of a slave-woman to her white master, and now occupied a prominent position in the colony. He was a member of the House of Assembly, and one of the few who advocated the cause of the people. What the motives were which actuated George William Gordon as a political agitator, it is impossible for a member of the white race to determine. They are not likely to be found tabulated in a Commissioner's Report. To apprehend them one must possess the strange nature which a mixture of black and white blood creates. There are many such Gordons to-day in Jamaica, and will be as long as the coloured race lasts. The point to be noted is that he was not a negro, but a half-caste. After he assumed a leading position, some faint glimmering of an ordinary political organisation appeared. It was clear, however, that if a serious impression was to be made, the black race must be used as a lever. The negroes everywhere were, therefore, called upon to unite and set forth their grievances. They

were told that the Government was responsible for the decay of the country, and the oppressive laws which were being enacted ; that it ignored their position and treated them with contempt. Hitherto they had been too timid to assert themselves. Now, under the support of the educated class, many came boldly forward. Not that there was any thought of a general rising in the mind of the agitators. They were merely playing upon the people to create a situation which would force a radical change in the conditions of Government. Their error was in believing that there could be a situation short of anarchy which would induce such a change. The movement accordingly went on until the increasing friction resulted in a flash, sudden, fierce, and evanescent.

High-sounding names have been given to the disturbance at Morant Bay in 1865. It was not, however, a rebellion against the Crown. It was not a rising against the Island Government. It was not even a demonstration of a general character. It was simply a parochial riot originating in local circumstances of a specially acute kind. It occurred in a parish which had been backward since emancipation. St. Thomas lies in the south-east

corner of the island and is isolated from the rest by the high range of the Blue Mountains and its spurs. It extends from the highest peaks down to the river plains and the sea, and is reached from the capital by a road running along the coast. The district was rich in agricultural possibilities, but the tide of industry and progress had been deflected in other directions. It had been neglected by the best missionary bodies, and had come less within the influence of higher forces than any other section of the country. There was a community of twenty-three thousand negroes and coloured persons buried among its dense vegetation. The whites numbered but three hundred, and were chiefly connected with the sugar-estates on the hot lowlands. In the circumstances it was not strange that the latter retained all their old habits and prejudices, or that among the freed people memories of the slave-fields were still strong. There was indeed no part of the colony where the human soil was so rich in all the constituents that contribute to the growth of sinister action. The whites were a kind of close corporation; they dealt with public matters in a private and mutually convenient way. The rights of the

blacks were deliberately disregarded ; they had difficulty in procuring land for cultivation, and they were treated in all the relations of life with contemptuous indifference. Gentlemen interested in the sugar-estates composed the magistracy, and passion rather than equity determined the course of judgment. The people, indeed, had lost faith in the courts and had established their own tribunals. It was these two factors, contempt of race and injustice, that wrought all the havoc in St. Thomas. The negroes can endure many things, but not these ; and it was surprising that they suffered in silence so long. Drought, scarcity of food, absence of employment, and other circumstances brought matters to a head. When the agitation began it happened that Gordon's power predominated in the parish. He had large interests in it. He was its member in the House of Assembly ; he was a leader among the native Baptists, a sect, as we have seen, not distinguished for intelligence or self-control ; he was mixed up in its local quarrels. His influence now became very great among the people, and their dark and angry condition of mind made it one wholly for evil. Still, no plan of active hostility

against the authorities was entertained. There was great irritation in consequence of the injudicious policy of the whites, and much economic distress; but the attitude was identical with that visible all over the island, one merely of protest and expostulation. We find, for instance, the humble black men, on whom the destiny of the island was resting, going in together to the old capital to appeal personally to the Governor. This was not a tactic that would have been adopted by a revolutionary organisation. A few kindly words, or an expression of sympathy, might have averted disaster. He was Mr. Eyre, the same Governor who a short year before had made a tour of the island and found, as he said, "the inhabitants one and all animated by the same spirit of warm loyalty, considerate kindness, and generous hospitality," and who, in this same parish and district, "was received with the greatest hospitality by the peasantry themselves." "All along the way," he also wrote, "they lined the road, and over each gateway there would be a couple of cocoanut boughs bent to the posts and tied together, with fruit and flowers hanging from them, and my carriage was repeatedly inundated with

bouquets." He was an able man, strong and courageous, and previously not unkind in his dealings with lower races ; but on this occasion he made the mistake of his life. Harassed at this time with political matters, he was probably in no pleasant frame of mind. At any rate he refused even to see the members of the deputation, and they returned, with feelings outraged, to their homes in the far east. Now that the agent of the Queen himself had turned against them, they lost the little hope they had, and developed a recklessness of demeanour which boded ill for the good order of the parish.

One market-day the town was, as usual, crowded with peasants. The minor Criminal Court was also being held. Many of the moodier spirits were in the building. Some of their number had been disputing with a white proprietor as to the ownership of a piece of land. They believed in their simple way that it belonged to "Missis Queen," and that they were entitled to the free use of it. The reputed owner resisted the claim and gained his case. The occupiers refused to pay rent, and he brought an action for trespass. This, it may be remarked, was the only legal evidence for the finding of the subsequent Commission

that the principal object of the disturbers of order was the obtaining of land free from the payment of rent. The statement has commonly, but erroneously, been interpreted as applying to the entire island. As the ordinary business proceeded, and before the case came on, an incident occurred which none foresaw or premeditated. It proved, however, to be the spark which caused the conflagration. A boy was convicted on a charge of assault. The costs were fixed at more than three times the amount of the fine, and some one in the audience audibly advised him simply to pay the latter. This person was signalled out and taken into custody by the police, but the people around twice effected his rescue. The division of feeling at once became deep and wide. Two days later a warrant was issued for the arrest of the chief participators in the irregular episode. The people were prepared for this ; in their desperation they were now resolved to resort to extreme measures, and they withstood the constables who penetrated to their holdings to carry it into effect. This was the "planned resistance to lawful authority," which has also been accepted as referring to the island generally. Thoroughly roused,

hundreds assembled to discuss the situation. In such circumstances, men, and least of all ignorant negroes, do not choose their words, and there was naturally a good deal of violent language uttered. It was decided to appeal to the Governor, and to attend the next meeting of the vestry to re-state their grievances. It should be noted that these events followed on the heels of one another, and that Gordon at the time was attending to his duties in Kingston, thirty miles away. The fact that, even when the situation was most acute, they still took thought of the Queen's representative, indicated how willing they were to recognise and maintain their proper relation to the authorities. Emanating from a body of excited negroes the petition was couched in somewhat excited language; but it merely complained of the usage to which they were being subjected, and asked for protection. The answer was written before a knowledge of the subsequent crisis reached the Governor, and it clearly indicated his singular incapacity to understand the position. He coldly stated that they were being misled, accused them of gross outrage and violence, and warned them that the law would be upheld. But the worst had already

come. The vestry met next day, and the people gathered in stormy, threatening mood in front of the court-house where it sat. The intention to attend in mass deputation was no secret. The authorities knew of it, and prepared a counter demonstration. The Governor had been asked for the services of a military force, and in the meantime the volunteers of the district were summoned. These were drawn up in front of the building. The result was inevitable. In the courtyard irascible, unyielding white and much-enduring, exasperated black stood face to face expectantly. The first missile was thrown by the crowd; the first blood was shed by the authorities. Then the passion of the mob leapt forth and wrought its will, like the passion of all mobs when provoked beyond endurance. In this case, however, there were no long centuries of disciplined civilization between those who composed it and the original animal. The descent was sheer into pure unconscious brutality, which operated until the fever of hate had been slaked. They killed in their rage twenty-one of all colours. One overseer also died from exposure. On the other hand the superior whites, who ought to have exercised

the prerogative of self-restraint, killed, first in rage and then in cool deliberation, four hundred and thirty-nine negroes, scourged with great barbarity six hundred, including women, "punished" with more or less severity a large number of others, and destroyed in wantonness a thousand homes. It will be seen that when the balance is struck the result is all in favour of the black. The episode is, in fact, one of the most shameful, one of the least excusable, in the whole range of our Colonial history. It was asserted that ruthless measures were necessary in order to check a general rising of the negroes. There is no evidence to support the assumption beyond the circumstance that distress and discontent were rife everywhere, and that here and there appeared prominent symptoms of the disease. There was no concerted idea or intention running through the mind of the people in the mass, least of all through the minds of the blacks. The spectre of rebellion was raised by the whites. At the news of the riot rational thought abdicated and left them possessed by the devils of panic. Every look, every action, of the black and brown population throughout the island was invested with fearful meaning.

These wretches were at heart as afraid as themselves at the turn of affairs, and their very nervousness lent an air of conspiracy to all their movements. So liable is human nature to hug the thought of danger that memories still linger of risk and peril which never existed save in imagination. The same kind of public feeling prevailed in England during the Chartist agitation, when rich and poor alike were filled with anxiety through ignorance of each other's motives and intentions.

It was during this period of palpitating fear that the authorities offered up Gordon's life on the scene of disorder, a sacrifice to a condition of things which they themselves had created. For it was the Government which was primarily to blame for the tragedy. It had refused to accept the responsibility of educating the people; for a whole generation it had done nothing to improve their ethical and industrial efficiency. It had proved incapable of governing the country aright; it had reduced it to a state of bankruptcy and ruin. It had allowed race-prejudice, private animosities, and class-oppression to prevail. It had defied the spirit of discontent until in one quarter it issued in a quarrel and a riot. And it was this haphazard

disturbance which it mistook for disloyalty and planned rebellion. On the contrary, the blacks were then, as now, loyal in a measure which few who do not know them can understand. Loyalty they believe to be love for the Queen and obedience to her ruling. They had never been taught to be loyal to the Island Government, except to its temporary head, her representative. They regarded the legislators as local intermediaries, who were themselves in opposition to Her Majesty, and who went so far sometimes as to disobey her orders. It must be admitted that they had good reason for their conviction. Never in their own opinion had their attitude violated the principles of loyalty; the position into which they had been forced was only adopted in self-defence against the controlling class in the country which was abusing its power. Up to the last they were willing to be led, and it would have been a simple task to have approached them in the Queen's name, conciliated them, and drawn out their patience and fealty. This could have been done even independently of public reform, for no race is so submissive and long-suffering. But their real position was unknown, and their real

motives misread. They were not understood, and no trouble was taken to understand them. Instead of repulsing them, the Government ought to have regarded them as children crying from some unseen cause, which it should have sought to localise and remedy. Even a simple Proclamation, similar to those formerly issued in periods of disquiet, would have won them over. By leaving them alone it strengthened the hands of the white and coloured agitators, who led them to their undoing. It is well to remember that Gordon, like many others who were taken into custody, owed his existence to the white race, and that the latter, in this way also, may be held responsible for the tragedy. The sins of the fathers returned upon their own and their children's heads, and involved them in common ruin. It was stern retribution, but the latter were more to be pitied than blamed. Several whites, Englishmen among them, were also arrested as ringleaders, though this fact has usually been overlooked. The blacks themselves have never been able to define and defend their position, and they have consequently been made the scapegoat of the movement, and been regarded even among whites

suspicion and fear. At the worst, however, they did less than the people of other countries have done, and will do again, when reduced to wretchedness by misgovernment. We find in history the same circumstance constantly repeated. The greatest revolution in modern times was due to the misrule and corruption of the classes, and its success was due to the fact that these classes had reached a point when they began to recognise the false position which they occupied. There is, indeed, in many respects, a striking resemblance between the conditions in Jamaica and the tremendous upheaval which reconstituted France towards the end of the last century. The closest parallel perhaps is to be found in the outbreak in Lower Canada in 1837. Papineau was exactly in the same position as Gordon, and hostilities first proceeded from resistance to the capture of prisoners. But the rebellion in Canada is considered an honourable incident in history, whereas the minor and accidental affray in Jamaica has been magnified into a great horror, because the skins of some of the disaffected were black.

The death of Gordon created a profound

sensation in the colony. What he was unable to do in life his death at once brought about. The Legislature, like Judas, repented, in that it had sinned and betrayed innocent blood, and it came together and hanged itself. In the last address to which it would ever listen, and perhaps the most foolish which it had ever heard, the Governor stated that a "mighty danger" threatened the land, and that there "was scarcely a district or a parish where disloyalty, sedition, and murderous intentions were not widely disseminated." The peasantry, he added, "ought to be better off, more comfortable, and more independent than the labourers of any other country," and "if it is not so, it is due to their own indolence, improvidence, and vice." And the Legislature agreed with him. It was "deeply impressed with the full conviction that nothing but the existence of a strong government could prevent the island from lapsing into the condition of a second Hayti." It is curious how this affirmation has been misinterpreted. We find it invariably quoted in support of the contention that the black population were unfit for liberty. What it asserted was that the Government was unfit for governing. It

was a confession of political weakness and impotence, a self-written certificate of worthlessness. It was an acknowledgment that the planting *régime* had brought about the demoralization of the colony, and that class government was no longer possible. Having arrived at the just conclusion that it was incapable of administering the affairs of the colony, the Legislature surrendered all its powers and privileges, placed the country unreservedly into the hands of the Crown, and effaced itself from existence. Its manner of doing so was thoroughly in harmony with its past spirit. It adopted the *rôle* of the martyr and "immolated itself on the altar of patriotism," as "a noble example of self-denial and heroism." All the blame was thrown on the negroes. It was an ignoble but fit end to a legislative body which left the country it had ruled in no better condition than when it first took up its duties two hundred years before.

CHAPTER V.

A FRESH START.

(1866-1885.)

ON the lowlands of Jamaica, between May and October, little or no rain falls. The land gradually becomes parched and hard, undergrowth shrivels up, and life grows to be a burden to man and beast. As the season proceeds, the sense of oppression increases, and eyes are turned longingly towards the horizon whence the rains approach. At last, dark formless clouds advance up the sky and hang overhead without dissolving. There is a sound of thunder pealing afar off, and the night is alive with wildfire. Then some hot day, or breathless night, suddenly, a cool gush of wind sweeps across the plain. It dies away, and in the silence one hears the rush of the on-coming rain. It takes possession of the country, and for days, sometimes for weeks, it beats down upon the earth. When it ceases for good the

soil is instinct with new vitality, and in a short time there is wrought a great change. Fragrance, and colour, and fruitage have succeeded the conditions of the desert. Here, in parable, we have shadowed forth the chief stages in the recent history of Black Jamaica. For nearly thirty years the negro had been languishing in barren neglect. When the situation became intolerable, the riot occurred. It seemed to be a necessary convulsion ; necessary to force aside obstruction that impeded development ; without it development was impossible. It was one of the incidents of the world that appear accidental and meaningless, but which are the dynamic of evolution. A complete transformation ensued. The reign of the planters had ended ; the ascendancy of the negro had begun. It was at this date, and not, as commonly supposed, at Emancipation, that the race made its real start on the path of progress.

At first, however, no section of the community was specially recognised. The Imperial Government sent out a dictator whose duty it was to create new order and symmetry out of chaos, and he was instructed to take account of the people in the mass, without distinction

of class, colour, or creed. Of necessity, therefore, his rule was a stern and absolute one, but he was wise as well as strong, and the task was skilfully accomplished. A new fiscal system was created. Drastic reforms were effected in all the public departments. An efficient police service was established. The judiciary was re-constituted. Improvements took place in the prisons. A medical service and a Government savings-bank were provided for the benefit of the people. The proper registration of births and deaths began. Better sanitary laws were enacted. A department of public works was organised for the management of the roads and Government buildings; these, it was found, were in a wretched condition of decay and burdened with a debt of £133,000. Postal improvements were inaugurated. The Church of England, which had proved so unworthy of its trust and opportunities, was disestablished, and in its place there rose up a missionary denomination bearing the same name, but exhibiting a better spirit and more earnest action, and adding largely to the total religious force of the island. An important step was also taken with regard to the education of the people. An inspection of the schools demon-

strated that little or no general benefit had been derived from their existence during the previous thirty years. Two-thirds entirely failed to come up to the standard, and nearly all the others were placed in the lowest class. But nothing better in the circumstances was to be expected. A new system, according to which the annual grants were based on results, was instituted, small amounts for new buildings were added, and some provision was made for the more efficient training of the teachers. A large additional expenditure was necessary to carry out most of these changes. But we have come now to an era of careful reports and statistics, and these demonstrate that, within two years, the large deficit in the revenue was made good, the finances were placed on a sound basis, and the credit of the island restored. Year after year a surplus was reported—in 1869 it was £58,896—in spite of a steadily increasing outlay in the educational, medical, and public works departments, and without any increase of taxation. Various dues and taxes were, indeed, remitted. No argument against the character of the previous administration could be stronger than these plain facts, and no better illustration could be afforded of the

beneficial results that follow upon the inflow into the tropics of the disciplined energy of the North.

The planters retired to their estates, and were never again heard with the old voice of authority. Their position grew gradually worse. Beet-sugar, produced on the continent of Europe under a system of governmental aid, was now coming more and more into the markets, and still further reducing prices, and against this bounty-fed antagonist they found it impossible to compete. There were two open courses before them. One was to secure the best and most productive varieties of cane, to introduce the most efficient and economical methods of cultivation, and to keep pace in the manufacturing process with the improvements being effected in other countries. A variation of this course would have been the establishment of central factories, and this would have benefited the negro settlers as well as themselves. The alternative policy was the substitution of other cultures for the cane. Some planters did bestir themselves, and in those instances, where modern appliances were installed and scientific supervision added, a fresh lease of life was given to the estates, thus indi-

cating that what was required was merely an infusion of the spirit of self-help. But as a body they clung to their traditional sentiment, and with that fatal supineness which is usually associated with residence in the tropics, refused to consider the possibility of a change. They looked instead to the Imperial Government for assistance. They claimed that a countervailing duty should be placed on the importations of beet-sugar into Britain in order that both classes of produce might compete in the market on the same terms. This really meant that the British public should pay the cost of maintaining the colonial estates in a state of inefficiency with profit to the owners. The Home Government ignored the appeal, and the plantations reverted to bush at the rate of two and three every year. Unable to adapt themselves to circumstances, the planters were unfit to survive in the economic struggle, and they did not survive. Stationed apart from each other, without any common bond of union, brooding solitarily in the midst of their contracting cane-fields and antiquated works, they awaited the end. Their career and their fate form one of the strangest, one of the saddest, episodes in the history of industrial evolution.

Henceforward, only occasional glimpses of the diminishing remnant are caught, and although sugar continued to be a staple production, it ceased to be a factor directly influencing the development of the black race.

The people had been moved out of their apathy by the trial through which they had passed, and the stir of continuous reform kept them interested and alert. The return of the normal conditions of climate relieved the situation in the case of the majority. General labour also became more abundant, though the best still turned instinctively from the sugar-estates. It was obvious, however, that new sources of prosperity were necessary to give them better occupation and a fresh measure of hope. Independent endeavour was the aspiration of the many, and the cultivation of a provision field, with a little coffee and cane, was not now sufficient to satisfy them. But there seemed nothing more to be done. It was singular that, in a country teeming with agricultural possibilities, the principal articles produced for export should have been so few. The truth is, that the whites had always made sugar and rum supreme. The fortunes of the colony were considered to be bound up in these

products ; without them, they thought, it could not exist. The negroes had naturally imbibed the same idea. Most of the fruits were allowed to fall and rot. Attempts had been made to establish a market for them in the United States, but it was not until a trading captain discovered the potential wealth lying in bananas that the industry began to flourish. A small ship-load of the yellow, or Martinique, now known as the Jamaica banana, was taken from a northside port to the United States as a speculation. The venture paid, and was repeated. This was the turning-point in the economic history of the country. The business grew, and to meet the increasing demand the people went on planting until the cultivation of this fruit was widely established throughout the island. In 1867 the value of the exportation was £728. In 1874 the number of bunches exported was 85,083, of the value of £6,381. In 1880 it had increased to 440,642 bunches, of the value of £38,556. By 1884 as many as 1,842,934 bunches were shipped annually, of the value of £191,972. No industry was better fitted to be the pioneer of the new *régime*. Its culture gave no trouble. The negroes could grow either a couple or a grove

of trees, and whether they sold one bunch of the fruit or fifty bunches, they always received fair remuneration. It also furnished an object-lesson in exportation. Hitherto, their coffee or other produce had been sold on the spot to runners, or agents of the city merchants, and they had but the vaguest idea as to its ultimate destination. But in the case of bananas, they carried them down to the seaport, watched them being counted and shipped, and saw the steamer sail. The circumstance widened their conception of things. They began to cultivate with more intelligence, and consciously for export, and they learnt that only the best quality was of value. It was a very small step upward; nevertheless, it was a distinct improvement on their previous condition, and there was in it a promise of higher attainment. Cocoanuts and oranges were added, and the exportations of these also became large. All would have gone well had the middlemen not again appeared, and, as competition increased, tempted the people to dispose of the fruit in immature condition. The system of accepting advances on the growing crops was also extending. These evils should have been provided against, but the Government was busy

with more elemental State matters, and nothing was done ; and they continued and augmented until they became two of the greatest drawbacks to the agricultural progress of the race.

The social condition of the majority was less capable of being rapidly ameliorated. For a generation they had been neglected by the Government. The moral suasion of the Church had not been supported by legislative action. No proper measures had existed for the education of the young, the training of the ignorant, or the reclamation of the idle and criminal ; and the effects of that laxity were now visible. The negro community was divisible into three sections. One section was composed of the best of the old stock, who had established themselves in the hills and were gradually falling into line with all the customs and rules of civilized existence. They owned their homes and fields, attended church and sent their children to school ; they lived, in short, a sober and responsible life, and formed the leaven amidst which the Churches were most successfully carrying on their operations. The second was made up of agricultural and general labourers with some fixity of interest and abode. The latter was not a home, merely a shelter in



GROUP OF EX-SLAVES, JAMAICA
(Many of these are still living).

Photo by Hon. Dr. Johnston.



which to pass the night. No attention was paid to decency ; there was nothing that was not absolutely necessary. In the one apartment father and mother, sons and daughters, and cousins—and there is always a large number of “cousins” in Jamaica—all slept together. This loose, easy-going arrangement was typical of the whole life. The third class was found everywhere. It comprised those who dwelt in wretched hovels or in single rooms in common yards, without settled ties, and steeped in squalor and sensuality. The children grew up without education or sense of morality, and when they arrived at the age of puberty they threw off parental control, such as it was, built a hut or rented a room, employed a fraction of their time in securing a bare livelihood, entered into illicit unions, produced children, and separated after a longer or shorter interval to form other connections of an equally transient nature. It was upon this class chiefly that the special circumstances of the great crisis had acted as a solvent, breaking up its state of passive indulgence, and turning it into an active agency of evil. The condition of the young was sad in the extreme. Few became moral members of

society. As very children they lived together, producing children, and in many cases boys of twelve consorted with more than one girl of the same age. Even among the respectable classes it was a common saying that a young man must stop some time with a girl before marriage in order to know if she would suit him. It was often a mere excuse to go from one to the other. The father of a child was seldom known. Young men and women of fourteen years of age and upwards also formed themselves into roving gangs, and moved from sugar-estate to sugar-estate working for short periods on each. Separate accommodation was not usually provided, and the sexes slept together wherever they could find a convenient shelter. Resenting interference with the licence of their habits, they wallowed in habitual profligacy, unrestrained by any feeling of shame or regard for consequences. All this was a descent to a depth never reached even in the days of physical bondage. Thoughtful men in the community regarded the growth of demoralisation with anxiety. The feeling was not confined to the missionaries, for a sense of responsibility towards the negroes was now beginning to dawn upon minds hitherto in-

sensible to any such obligation. Suspecting the real significance of the phenomena, they too began to press the Government to take action. Something, the latter now thought, might be done. For the first time, therefore, since Emancipation the negroes were directly taken into account, and legislation in their interests attempted. This was the final blow to the *régime* of the classes. The colony had come at last within the imperious sway of humanitarian sentiment.

A Commission was appointed to inquire into the condition of the juvenile population. It found that the demoralisation which was so rampant was the result of a generation's neglect. So far as the needs of the colony could be seen they were set forth. The gradual introduction of compulsory education and an easy system of apprenticeship were suggested. In order to restrain over-crowding and provide for the observance of common decency a revision of the sanitary laws was advised, along with inspection and regulation of the conditions under which market people spent the night in towns. One of the most important proposals was that illicit unions should entail at least a pecuniary obligation equal to that of ordinary

marriage—in other words that fathers should contribute to the support of their illegitimate children. A change in the industrial school system and radical reform in poor-relief administration were also advocated. It was, perhaps, too much to expect the new altruism to express itself thus early in perfect action. The conduct of the authorities towards the blacks was itself in process of evolution, and for them to pass immediately into angels of reform was not in the nature of things. They were also handicapped by a feeling of distrust, and even of fear, of the people, believing that any restriction of their freedom would lead again to opposition and trouble. Hence the eclecticism shown in carrying into effect the recommendations of the Commission. The system of education was not interfered with at all, because if an Act embodying the principle of compulsion had been passed there would have been the necessity of enforcing it, and this, they considered, was too uncertain an experiment to essay. Some of the measures enacted served simply to salve the newly-awakened conscience of the country. The sanitary laws were revised as proposed, and a law was passed to correct the evil of over-

crowding in private houses, but neither the old nor the new provisions trenching on personal liberty were put into practice. The people were allowed to go on living as they pleased. The promiscuous gatherings of market people in corners of the city at night remained unregulated. A building law for Kingston was passed but not carried out. An apprenticeship law was provided, but little or no advantage was taken of it. In this case the fundamental drawback was an aversion on the part of the negroes to the principle of indenture, which recalled the former state of servitude. The absence of a legal guardian was also another common difficulty. The old methods therefore continued in force. Lads remained a short time in the workshop, picked up a slight knowledge of tools, and then set up as skilled master-workmen. To meet illegitimacy an Act was passed providing for the determination of the putative father and the affiliation of the children. But the initiative was left to the mother, and the cost of the process prevented her resorting to it. The law became practically a dead letter, and the evil existed unchecked save for the moral agencies put into action by the Churches.

Something was done, however, with the industrial schools. These, it should be mentioned, had been instituted and conducted by private enterprise and had been taken over by the Government. The paupers and criminals had been placed together. This system was now changed. Destitute children were sent to industrial schools proper, and criminal children to reformatories, boys and girls being placed in separate establishments. The methods of administering poor-relief were improved. For vagrancy the Commissioners had no remedy. In their opinion it was impossible to compel men to work in the tropics.

These tentative efforts at reform were not without a beneficial moral effect on the negro population. They saw that their interests were being considered and that the larger proportion of the public expenditure was now being incurred in their behalf. The knowledge reassured and steadied them. Gradually, almost unconsciously, their position improved. The unemployed dwindled away and finally disappeared with the opportune demand for labour in connection with the Panama Canal. The Jamaica negro was most in repute for this purpose, and many thousands left annually for

the Isthmus. So large an exodus affected the local labour supply, and an attempt was made to fill up the vacated places by imported Chinese, but these gave great trouble, and induced many a planter to think more kindly of the African. Predial larceny (as theft from fields or cultivated ground is termed) which is peculiarly the crime of the distressed, steadily diminished until the police pronounced it to be practically extinguished. The number of prisoners in the penal establishments fell off to about one half. Social evils assumed a less aggressive shape, and were either slurred over or forgotten by the community at large. All the unrestful feeling passed away and there ensued a period of industrious calm. The larger yield of taxes on property proved that the people were becoming wealthier. They were rapidly buying up the land, a form of investment much favoured by those who returned from the Isthmus. The agricultural class increased from 143,698 in 1871 to 208,587 in 1881. In the thirteen years ending 1883 the small holders of less than ten acres increased by ten thousand, while those of from ten up to one hundred acres increased by two thousand. Among these, however, there must

have been some who owned more than one holding. On the other hand there had been but a slight increase of proprietors owning from one to two hundred acres, and of proprietors holding above that acreage there had been a sensible decrease. The great majority of the small holders were, of course, blacks. They were now raising more than ground provisions; the cultivation of coffee had widely spread, and ginger, pimento, fruit and other products were being taken up; and they were contributing largely to the volume of exports. In 1865 the value of the outgoing trade had been £912,000; it was now about a million and a half. In 1883-84 it afforded special evidence of the great development of the minor industries. The increase in the exportation of the products of these was nearly sufficient to counterbalance the diminished value of sugar and rum, and temporary decreases in coffee and pimento. This result was obtained in spite of the fact that the Government was making no effort to train the people as cultivators and that they were pursuing methods as primitive as they had followed in Africa.

The elementary schools continued to be carried on as denominational institutions by the various religious bodies. As already stated,

the Government had stepped in, provided in some measure for the training of teachers, made grants-in-aid, and organised a system of inspection. But beyond this it had not felt inclined to go. The only development which took place was in attendance and expenditure. In 1872, the fifth year of the new code, there were 38,006 on the books, the grants-in-aid amounted to £9,897, and the fees paid by the parents had risen to £5,873. This meant that only one-third of the ordinary juvenile population was at school, but it showed that progress was being made. The desire among parents to have their children well-trained continued to be noticeable, and despite the drawbacks incidental to a system which merely touched the surface, the work of the schools visibly began to tell on the community. In 1885 there were 61,570 children enrolled on the books, the Government grants amounted to £21,600, while the fees paid by the parents increased to £7,900. The latter, however, were often obtained with difficulty. One factor operating against a regular collection was the custom of parents to withdraw their children at certain seasons and utilise their services for the conveyance of produce to market, the picking

of coffee or pimento, the digging of pindars, or the performance of light field-work on the estates. Girls suffered more than their brothers, as they would frequently be kept at home to look after an infant while the mother was engaged in the fields. Though the gain was slight, the slightest direct gain was still more to the peasantry than the unseen value of education. The teachers as a rule were men of low intelligence. Their incomes depended upon their own exertions, and a first-class master was well able to earn a fair salary. Many of them acted also as catechists, and as the schools were open only four days in the week they had the opportunity of adding to their means in other directions. But the best class of blacks had not as yet adopted the profession; if they possessed ability at all they found more agreeable and remunerative employment in other spheres. In more than one-half of the schools the teachers were unfitted for their positions. Many of them were dishonest, and cases of fraudulent registration of the attendances by which the amounts of the grants-in-aid were calculated were common. As instructors they were almost useless. They spoke to the scholars in their own *patois*, taught them by rote, and were incapable of

discipline. Nothing better, perhaps, could be expected. And yet there was continuous advancement. The ignorance of the race generally was so dense that the crudest efforts were bound to have some effect. But deducting what was accomplished in twenty years from what might have been, the balance represents the undischarged responsibility of the Government, and it is not small. Its conscience was never allowed to sleep, for all intelligent men in the colony were now impressed with the conviction that the mental enfranchisement of the negro was the essential condition of his elevation and progress. A re-organization of the entire system with the abolition of compulsion was continuously urged, but while the Government agreed as to the necessity for reform, the proposals involved such large questions of policy and finance that it hesitated to act. The time had not arrived, it said, for enforcing attendance, though those who know the people well, and some of the advanced negroes themselves, thought that the innovation would not be resisted as much as was apprehended, and suggested a beginning in towns and populous sections. There was no pressing want, however, which such the local

and Home Governments seemed anxious to meet. This was the higher education of girls and the training of them as teachers. An institution for the purpose was accordingly established. It will thus be seen that while the Government now provided the larger proportion of the money and the supply of teachers, the burden of management still fell upon the missionaries. With them lay the responsibility of maintaining the work, and the initiative of expanding it to meet growing wants ; on them, in short, still depended the intellectual as well as the moral enlightenment of the race. The task was felt to be too great for Churches in such a position, and they continued to keep the subject of reform before the Government. One can discern in the writings and representations of this time the outline of all subsequent improvements. The need for industrial education by which qualified artisans, mechanics, and agriculturists could be produced was also recognised, but much less distinctly. This matter, indeed, had not yet come within the range of practical discussion.

In social qualifications there was a slight but appreciable advance. The stir created by the fruit trade, the inflow it occasioned of

strangers unfettered by traditional prejudice, the freer intercourse among all classes, the expansion of mind which even a visit to the Isthmus brought about, were all contributing to sharpen the wits and broaden the outlook of the people. The economic changes were rapidly transforming the conditions of peasant life. Hitherto Kingston had been the centre of activity, the country had lain dead behind it. Trade had been in the hands of large importing firms in the city, who supplied the outports and a few townships in the interior. With the disappearance of the estates and the multiplication of small holdings and the increase of village settlements, there were now springing up everywhere stores stocked with the common necessities of life. Many provincial merchants began to import their own goods and to open up small branches wherever the opportunity occurred. This process went on until the entire country was dotted over with sources of supply, to which the people became so habituated that they only resorted to Kingston and the other towns on special occasions. These facilities were leading them, unconsciously, into higher habits. Their supreme desire was to appear well in the eyes of the superior classes, and

they were thus tempted to spend a large part of their money on dress. The inclination was still towards "monkey style," but in the towns the examples of the whites, many of whom had in self-defence assumed the quietest of costumes, was making an impression on the more intelligent negroes. A far greater number everywhere wore boots and shoes. As the outcome of the same feeling there was an endeavour on the part of many to improve their homes and surroundings. The house-tax, levied for the relief of the poor, operated to some extent against this tendency, and made it difficult for a general improvement to take place. A distinction was made between floored and unfloored houses, the former being assessed on a higher value, and the more ignorant class preferred to live on the bare earth rather than bring themselves under the increased rate. Cases were reported where new floors were torn up by the occupants when they learnt that they would require to pay an extra sum for the privilege. Of the 124,106 houses enumerated in the census returns twenty-nine per cent. had shingled roofs, and sixty-seven per cent. were roofed with grass thatch. Of the former eight per cent., and of the latter sixty-seven per cent., were without

any flooring. In their private life, where the public eye could not follow them, the evolution of habit was less visible. They had not yet received any revelation of the simple but inexorable laws of health by which their every action was surrounded, and they obeyed none. The Government made no attempt to enlighten them. The majority of the deaths were due to preventable causes, over thirty per cent. alone being the issue of zymotic diseases. They wrought in the hot fields by day, and did not change their thin damp clothes for dry in the evening. If it rained, and they were drenched, it was just the same. From childhood up they constantly wore flannel next the skin, and they made no provision against sudden alternations of temperature. They slept in unventilated rooms, and in many thousands of homes the entire family lay together. They drank impure water, they ate badly cooked food, they were constantly consuming unripe and over-ripe fruit. In addition to all this their domestic environment was insanitary. When illness came they neglected themselves, or resorted as before to the quack and obeahman. Fatalism was common. Epidemics were looked upon as the visitations of God, and no care was

taken to avoid infection. "What fe do?" they would say with a shrug. The women were so ignorant and so careless that the infant mortality was incalculable. These things could not be otherwise. In many districts medical advice was unattainable, and in others it could only be secured after long delay, and at a cost quite beyond the reach of the masses. As a rule they sickened and died, like brutes, in the bush. In the matter of food they maintained their old tastes. Bread-stuffs were used to some extent by those in towns and villages, but seldom, if ever, by those in the country parts. The consumption of bread-stuffs was, on the average, about 25 lbs. per head per annum, at a cost of about five shillings. Bread itself was bought by the penny or penny-half-penny loaf, and was, on the whole, rather a luxury than a necessary. In some districts it was never seen. The principal food consisted of what is locally called "bread-kind"—yams, sweet potatoes, cocos, plantains, and other products grown in the provision grounds, with fruit. Mango trees grew in millions throughout the country. The mango is a luscious food, and during its season, from May to September, it formed in many districts, as it

does still, the chief source of sustenance among the poor. Very little advantage was taken of the resources of the seas surrounding the island, and the fishermen pursued their vocation in much the same fashion as the aborigines were doing when Columbus landed among them. At the same time there was a growing predilection for salted, cured, and fresh meat. The majority of the peasants kept pigs, goats, and fowls. Water, sugar-and-water, and bush tea were still the common drinks. Rum, though cheap, was very sparingly taken. Several circumstances indicated that the level of intelligence was rising. In 1865 the value of the books imported had been only £575; their value in 1885 was £8,374. A part of this increase was, no doubt, due to the number of educated persons who had come to the colony in connection with Crown government, but most of it must be attributed to the growing intellectual appetite of the people. In 1881 the census demonstrated that there were 115,418 persons who could read and write, and 115,750 who could read only, out of a population of 505,151 above five years of age, including white and coloured. The majority of the adult illiterates were blacks, but a large proportion of

these were men of the old stock, whose native ability was in nowise lessened by the absence of a knowledge of reading and writing. Habits of thrift were also being formed. The deposits in the Government Savings Bank showed large annual increases, and advantage was being taken of the new penny banks established by the Island Treasurer to encourage habits of economy among the young and the poor. The Government, it should be noted, had no responsibility with respect to these latter institutions; they were managed by ministers and others. The loyalty of the people had deepened, and good order prevailed in every corner of the land. Superstition was still prevalent, but it was now being affected by the spread of knowledge. The negro is very sensitive to the ridicule of the white, and he was beginning to feel himself morally naked, and to be ashamed. Obeahism was less openly acknowledged and practised, and larger numbers of obeahmen were being brought to punishment. The influence of Christianity was freely mingling with and modifying the old beliefs, and emotional revivalism was succeeding rites of a darker nature.

When it is considered that they had before

them only the example of a small number of isolated missionaries and a few good men and women outside the Churches, an appreciable development of the moral faculties could scarcely be expected. The Churches pursued their work with quiet persistence, drawing the black population more and more within their influence. Statistics are not always a criterion of growth, but they are at least an indication of the potential capability for it, and no more is claimed for the expansion at this period. Two more bodies had become independent. The London Missionary Society, believing its work in the island to be accomplished, withdrew its support from its mission, which was then formed into the Congregational Union. Later on, the parent society of the Wesleyan Methodists also threw the responsibilities of self-government upon the local Church, and the Methodist Connexion was the result. Some denominations were supporting schools for higher education and training colleges for teachers, and almost all were educating black and coloured men for the ministry. Several also had now begun to be a missionary force themselves, contributing towards pioneering in foreign fields

and sending out and supporting their own agents there. Individually they were passing from the position of mission stations to that of regular ecclesiastical organisations, exercising through their members all the varied functions of congregational life. Aggressive work was carried on. New churches were erected, substations were opened and placed in charge of native catechists, and schoolrooms and teachers' houses were built. The support of all this activity was mainly the black man and his offerings, proving that on the foundation of elementary character that had been laid there was now rising a superstructure of moral intelligence. The existence and quality of this intelligence, however, it is impossible to show in any determinate way. It is usual to take the nature of the sex-relation as an index of the morality of a primitive people, and in the case of the negroes of Jamaica it is always presented as conclusive evidence on the point. If we accept this method, it must be admitted that the statistics of the period are unfavourable ; though it should be borne in mind that the sexes were still largely independent of each other. Many lived in promiscuous fashion. There might be a common roof, but there was

no common interest or purse. If the man borrowed from the woman, for instance, he repaid her ; and so with her. She was practically his equal, and very often his superior, both in physique and force of character and in the capacity to earn a livelihood. The first official registration of births took place in 1878, when the percentage of illegitimacy was 59·3. In 1885 it was 59·9. The larger proportion of the children therefore were born out of wedlock. It is noteworthy that in the upland parishes, where the people were most advanced, the rate was lowest, and that in the lowland parishes, and especially in the sugar districts, the rate was highest. St. Thomas, the scene of the riot, exhibited the worst average of all. One year the rate there rose to 72 per cent. However, those who knew the country prior to this time were of opinion that matters had much improved. There was now a better knowledge of the requirements of the moral law. Respect and affection for each other was struggling up through the animal passion, and mutual attachment was more lasting. A wider desire existed for marriage. In 1871, 87,630 married persons were enumerated in the census returns. In 1881 the

number was 107,844, or an addition of twenty-three per cent. But there were two drawbacks. In the first place an indissoluble union was dreaded ; it was opposed to the whole bent of their nature as then constituted. They loved freedom and licence, and were not sufficiently trustful to place their lives permanently in each other's keeping. In the second place they thought it necessary to adopt the custom followed by the whites. Marriage, therefore, meant an expensive display, and as this was quite out of the reach of the majority, they preferred to come quietly together and live as man and wife without the ceremony. According to their own phrase they were "married but not parsoned." As before, many of these unions proved as faithful and abiding as those ordinarily contracted. In one case, for instance, the parties lived together for thirty-five years and were then married. But in all cases the offspring were officially classed as illegitimate, though the term did not imply so much as it does in other countries. As a whole the people were less openly gross, and were developing more self-respect and more dignity. Observers from Africa noticed an independence of demeanour and character which was absent in

the negroes of the West Coast. If a greater measure of self-consciousness accompanied these qualities, it was but the inevitable correlative of the racial phase through which they were passing. Continuous industry, self-reliance, and co-operation were less apparent.

Side by side with this slow evolution on the part of the blacks went a revolution of sentiment on the part of the whites. Some few hundreds of them had formerly monopolised the resources of the country and constituted the governing authority. Now there was a multitude of small cultivators contributing to the volume of trade and revenue, and on the way to become a chief power in the land. The significance of the change could no longer be disguised, and as a matter of self-interest, though reluctantly, the negroes were given their rightful place as the people and citizens of the State. The classes very soon turned the situation to their own advantage. The Government had been going on discharging its elementary functions. New measures had been taken to ensure the efficient administration of justice, the better organisation of the public departments, and the introduction of works of

general utility, such as irrigation, postal, telegraph, railway, and road facilities. But reform was now meeting with opposition. This was focussed by a chance political incident which led to a disagreement between the Executive and the nominated unofficial members of the Legislative Council. The latter resigned in a body, and, along with their friends, made the occasion the starting-point of an agitation in favour of a return to a representative Institution. They were supported by the local press, whose existence still depended almost wholly upon the patronage of the educated white. The principal ground of complaint against Crown government was its extravagance, but the charge was amply disproved. It was said, for instance, that the Government had expended over three million pounds sterling in excess of that expended by the old Legislature during the last sixteen years of its existence. But over two and a half millions of that had been spent on public works, on education, and in providing medical attendance for the people. The fact was that the expenditure had been required in order to do what had not been done during the two hundred years of representative government. The

planters had given up a necessary share of their income for public purposes, but they drained the country of the remainder, and there had been comparatively little voluntary improvement. The task which Crown government had to accomplish was practically to create a new country, and it had already achieved this without the slightest strain on the inhabitants. It was the sternness and impartiality of the rule that irritated the higher classes. After a period of recuperative quiet they were longing for an easier, a less inflexible, administration. This is the subtle danger always menacing the political systems of the tropics. The blacks regarded the movement with distrust. Hundreds of negroes in the capital, the sharpest and most intelligent of the race, protested against any innovation. They pointed out that Crown government had brought peace and harmony into a mixed and divided community, and permitted each class to work out its own destiny, and that never before had the great body of blacks been more satisfied and contented. "We rejoice to know," they said, "that we form no part in the number of those urging a change in the Constitution." And

yet it was upon the broad back of the negro that the responsibility for the agitation was laid. A deputation of affluent white and coloured colonists waited upon the Colonial Office with the tale that the movement had not originated "among the landowners or the higher classes," but among the black people who were craving "for the first instalment of liberty." The Colonial Office was not deceived. It was itself the representative and guardian of these hundreds of thousands of dumb negroes, and it had received no mandate from them to bring about the departure from the existing state of things. It did not believe that a score of years had materially altered the character of the white any more than they had materially altered the character of the black. Time had, no doubt, softened the relations of the two, but not to such an extent as to make it advisable to grant the colony another charter of political freedom. Still, it acknowledged that a despotic government could not be permanent. It was merely a bridge to span an interval the colonists themselves had created. It sympathised with their natural desire to manage their own affairs, and while it was impossible to return to the old conditions, it

was willing to agree to a substantial introduction of the elective principle as a first step in advance. The people would thus become habituated to the use of the privilege, and trained in the exercise of it, preparatory to the further extension of power in the future. A new Constitution was therefore granted, under which a Legislative Council was created, containing nine members elected by the people. These possessed a majority over the official element in ordinary circumstances, and the votes of two thirds governed all decisions on financial questions. The franchise was made so low that the negroes had the power to counterbalance any class representation if necessary. The qualifications were the payment of taxes by freeholders to the amount of thirty shillings, and by householders of twenty shillings. According to the first list of voters there was an electorate of 9,296, or one elector to every sixty-two persons in the island. Several contested elections occurred, but they were very quiet and orderly events, and the utmost good temper was exhibited by the blacks. An important sequel to this development was the application of the elective idea to parochial administration. The

nominated municipal and road Boards were abolished, and a single body of from thirteen to twenty members elected for each parish by those otherwise qualified to vote. The change was in some respects for the better; and it gave the people a further opportunity of becoming educated in the principles and practice of self-government. These concessions, although so liberal, were received with ill grace by the agitators, who had been aiming at full control. Public meetings were held, and protests forwarded to the Colonial Office, but without result. In the same year an important step was taken with regard to the lower grade clerkships in the Civil Service. These appointments had hitherto been filled up by white or slightly coloured persons recommended by the heads of the departments concerned, and nominated as a matter of course by the Governor. The posts were now thrown open, by competition, to all classes. Public opinion in the colony,—that is the opinion of the middle and upper strata of its society,—was in favour of competition among nominated candidates, with the object of maintaining the exclusive character of the service; but the Government adhered to its

determination to give the aspiring members of the lower race a stimulus to exertion and perseverance. The act created a very favourable impression on all those negroes who were able to think at all, and made them realise the benefit of possessing a strong, just, and unprejudiced Government.

CHAPTER VI.

OUTWARD PROGRESS.

(1885—1895-99.)

THE Plantation era in Jamaica saw the exploitation of its resources by a class at the expense of the social organism. After Emancipation there ensued twenty-eight years of stagnation and decay. From 1865 to 1885 there was great material activity. Since then there has been development in every sphere. A decade is a short stage in the evolution of a people. In the tropics, even in the most favourable circumstances, it is an inappreciable point in the long line of advance. Yet during the last ten or twelve years there has been more real attainment than in all previous periods together. Progress has been in inverse ratio to the lapse of time ; the country is earning compound interest on its investment in civilization. Hitherto we have been looking at the embryo of a race, in the crude and

passive existence of which there has been little to enlarge upon. More varied and complex phenomena now claim our regard.

In the present chapter we shall deal only with the outward progress made during the period. Several special tendencies can be traced making for the general result. On the one hand there has been the stir of agricultural, industrial, educational, and political events, which has set fresh currents of thought and discussion in motion among all classes ; on the other hand there has been the revelation of the Exhibition and the Royal Jubilee commemorations. The Jubilee of 1887 was celebrated in all parts of the island, and it was then and for the first time borne in upon the mass of the people that they were the subjects of a great empire founded and governed on principles of justice and peace. The knowledge deepened their loyalty, and increased their confidence and self-respect. But the exhibition of 1891 made a deeper impression on their minds. It was suggested by an official, and promoted, and its scope expanded, by the new Governor, Sir Henry Blake, in whose actions then and afterwards during the period we see the highest manifestation of the new

humanitarian policy. It was intended principally as an object-lesson to teach the people the nature and value of their productions, and to introduce to them the productions of other countries. The Governor addressed to them a simple message, and caused it to be spread broad-cast over the country, explaining the beneficent character of the undertaking and asking for exhibits of all kinds. At some personal inconvenience, also, he penetrated to every district and spoke to gatherings of peasantry on the subject. This was a departure of much import, for it was the first time in the history of the colony that a Governor had voluntarily sought out the negroes and appealed to their intelligence and interest. The exhibition was held in the capital and was opened by Prince George of Wales. At the outset many negroes were suspicious of its nature, half-believing that it was a device to entrap them into slavery, and for some time they were inclined to hold back. But they afterwards went in large numbers; and the handsome buildings with their multitudinous contents, the high-class amusements, the presence of visitors of all nationalities, and the general affluence of civilization usually concen-

trated in such undertakings, all combined to excite their thought and widen the range of their mental vision. It was a window through which they looked into the outer world. It gave obscure birth within them to a consciousness of their backward position, and with the knowledge came also the desire to improve it. Although it brought the island into notice and opened up new possibilities for an increase in material prosperity, yet its chief value lay in what has been stated. Aspiration and ambition began to appear in many quarters. The immediate outcome was a general restlessness and dissatisfaction with the prevailing conditions, and the development of several movements affecting the main aspects of national life. The Jubilee of 1897 came after many years of this activity, and its educative effect was wide and potent. There are now few negroes in the country, old or young, who have not some elementary idea of the political and historical relations which bind the Empire together.

The chief of the movements referred to was an agitation for a better system of agriculture. The majority of the population were engaged in cultivating the soil, and it was

felt that sufficient attention was not given to the subject by the Government. Still, what little it was doing was more than any previous administration had undertaken. The Governor early realised that the blacks were the masters of the future, and did not hesitate to act on the conviction. With true foresight he exerted himself to enlarge and strengthen the foothold of the white, but the tendency of his policy was to reverse the old conservative *régime*; to leave the sugar-planters alone, and to devote most care to the interests of the people. When he came to the island in 1889 he found their progress impeded by the lack of means of communication. They had, it will be remembered, migrated from the plains to the remote and unclaimed backwoods, where no roads of any kind existed. They were satisfied then to grow for their own needs. But when the fruit-trade began, they discovered the disadvantage of their position. They were obliged to bring down the fruit to the wharf or the nearest depot on their heads, or upon the backs of mules or donkeys. So long as they were thus isolated it was useless to go on increasing their production. The evil was more than one-sided. Numerous rivers were

crossed once or twice a week, and as women and children constituted two-thirds of the carriers the sense of decency was being perpetually outraged. During the rainy season it was dangerous to ford the streams when they were "down," as it is termed (that is, in flood), and in attempting to do so many persons were annually drowned. None felt the drawback more keenly than the negroes themselves. Their need impressed itself upon the Governor, and taking up the task left by his predecessor, he became above all things a road-maker and bridge-builder. During the twenty years prior to his advent only ninety miles of main road had been constructed and fifteen bridges built over rivers. In the six years following his advent a length of one thousand and seventy-two miles was added to the roads and one hundred and forty bridges were built. On one of his early journeys his carriage went through sixty-four rivers. Some years after he drove dry over the same route. This work continued throughout his administration. In addition to the erection of bridges everywhere, the highways were improved, extensive stretches of parochial roads were taken over and converted into the higher

class, new tracks into the heart of the virgin mountain lands were cut, the railway was extended, and the interior generally was opened up. These things are perhaps not the most vital needs of the people, but they are important pre-requisites, and the Governor claimed for them no higher purpose than that of paving the way for their moral and material advancement.

All this activity naturally stimulated the interest of the intelligent small settlers and peasant proprietors. Many of these had a thorough practical knowledge of planting, and showed it in their economical utilisation of the soil, their clean, highly-cultivated lands, and the superior quality of their produce. They were most numerous in the mountains, which always seem to evolve the best breed of men. But the great majority maintained their old methods. They lived usually in huts on a run of land in their own possession. Here there might be palm-trees, bread-fruits, akees, bananas, or coffee; but it was more often uncultivated and held in reserve. Their grounds were some distance away, usually high on the hills, and in these they grew yams, sweet potatoes, cocoa, coffee, cane,

and other products. The custom was to rent an acre or two of woodland from large lessees of the Government, or from private proprietors, at the rate of ten shillings or twenty shillings per annum. The piece was never surveyed, and its boundary existed only in theory. The timber was burnt as it stood, or cut down and allowed to rot as it lay. Countless trees of value, like cedar, mahogany, mahoe, and Santa Maria were thus annually destroyed. The undergrowth was removed by fire, an operation deemed important, as the ash, it was believed, assisted the soil, while the surface was sweetened and cleared of insects. There was no rotation of crops; it was rather a rotation of soil. When the surface became impoverished, they left the subsoil untouched and passed on to another acre, and every two or three years repeated the process. Most cultivators of ginger would plant only once in virgin land. As a rule more than the acre was destroyed, and the fire frequently spread beyond control. In one case which came under observation nearly fifty acres of wood were effaced to supply a negro with half an acre in which to plant a few cocos and yams. It was estimated at one time that about twenty

thousand acres of land, more or less in forest, were annually burnt by fire beyond what was necessary for the purpose of cultivation. No attempt to re-forest the old ground was made either by the Government or the public ; and, once abandoned, it lapsed into a state of permanent neglect. These lands which have fallen out of cultivation are significantly termed "ruinate." In the ginger districts the eye can see nothing to-day for many miles but common bracken and bitter-bush, and the bleached remnants of the primeval forest.

This nomadic system was opposed to all settled husbandry, and it had other far-reaching effects. Much time was consumed proceeding to and from the grounds ; it meant usually the loss of one or two days each week. Their unprotected position tempted the idle and dissolute to steal, and a good deal of the predial larceny of the island was due to this cause. It was, therefore, a barrier to the introduction of agricultural banks, because crops were too uncertain a security on which to lend money. The climatic amenity of many districts was also being disturbed, and droughts were becoming more frequent. The people, however, appeared to be unconscious of these things. Having

prepared and planted the ground, they waited for results. They had no idea of the composition of soils, the use of manures, the utility of drainage, the structure of plants, or the laws of growth. When told of the value of a knowledge of such things they would shake their heads. "God make the earth and man him can't make ee betta," was the remark of a settler who was advised to try manuring. They allowed their coffee to grow up wild in thick straggling groves, and without, or with too much, shade. Provisions were often planted in the same ground. The coffee sometimes died off, and they never knew why. They had never been told that the application of lime might save it in certain cases, or that pruning and proper protection would enhance the value of the berry. Budding and grafting were unknown processes. The damage caused by parasites passed unnoticed. Their handling of the produce was equally devoid of intelligence. They knew nothing of the most efficient modes of picking, drying, and curing. The appliances used for the preparation of ginger, the pulping of coffee, and the grinding of cane, were of the rudest nature. It was inevitable, therefore, that the

quality should vary greatly. It might be good, it might be inferior, and to Nature alone was due the fact that it was never thoroughly bad. Ground provisions, and the coarse sugar they manufactured, were disposed of in the local markets; articles like coffee, pimento, cocoa, kola, and fruit, were sold to the merchants or their agents for exportation. Whenever the price of a product was high abroad, and competition was keen, runners, engaged by the merchants, spread themselves over the country and bought up all the supplies the negroes could furnish. These were thrown together without selection or grading of any kind, and then shipped. This method had two effects. In the first place, it further decreased the industrial efficiency of the cultivators. They had no conception of anything beyond their visual range, and when they found their produce purchased year after year, in spite of quality, it was not surprising that they accommodated themselves to the situation. The buyers, in their greed, continued also to encourage them to mortgage their crops, and the system widened in scope until it included within its operation almost everything that was grown. On the one hand, the cultivator saw before him

a straight course of patient waiting ; on the other, an immediate supply of money or goods to gratify real or fancied wants. The temptation was always strong to the irresponsible mind, and the crops were usually sealed over to the mortgagee before he realised the significance of the act. The practice was utterly unsuited to a people in the early stage of racial evolution, and it produced a state of chronic indebtedness, which not only paralysed free and hopeful effort, but demoralised and broke up hundreds of decent homes. In the second place, the system injured the reputation of the country in the commercial centres of the world, where, in time, nothing but high-class produce from large and reputable growers was able to command a remunerative price. These results were apparent to the thoughtful observer ; but the same laws which dominated the sugar-planters were now at work among the general producers and dealers, and the result was the same. Selfish aggrandisement, inability to see and act on right principle, and the supineness which enslaves men in the tropics, were undermining their prosperity. Many, not interested in trade and commerce, protested. Even the people themselves began to grow uneasy and

dissatisfied. A vague belief that something was wrong, and that the Government could supply the remedy, crept into their minds. The belief found expression in public discussion, and out of the mass of opinion there gradually emerged into relief several distinct demands. These were, for instruction in cultivation, for supervision of trade, for the establishment of an agricultural department, for the institution of a loan bank, and for the utilisation of the Crown lands.

While recognising the need for the first, the Government did not see its way to make any concession. One important development was the inspiration of the people themselves. A number of them in one of the central districts requested the aid of a trained officer to instruct them how to grow their cocoa. A member of the botanical staff was despatched to the spot. He spoke to them in simple fashion on the elementary laws of agriculture, and demonstrated in their fields the proper methods of cultivating and preparing the product. He found them conscious of their ignorance and anxious to learn. When intelligence of the proceeding was published, applications for his services came from all parts of the island, and

he made a series of tours among the black peasantry. One incident will serve to illustrate the nature of his work. A settler came to him and said he had a large patch of coffee which seemed able to bear only round the outside. The officer visited the ground, and saw that the trees were planted too closely. He advised him to transfer half to a new field, and showed him how to perform the work. The planter began the removal, and then took a fit of doubt and fear and gave it up ; but the few thus transplanted thrive so well that after a time he resumed and finished the task, and both groves came into fine bearing. These visits have since continued to be made at intervals with the most beneficial results. The question of supervising trade, which included inspection of exports, the Government shirked ; the interest of the articulate few submerged the interest of the inarticulate many. It also refused to concede to a very strong and persistent agitation for an agricultural department. It inaugurated, instead, an agricultural society on a semi-voluntary basis. Although this is inadequate to do all that is required, it is accomplishing good among the more intelligent class by means of demonstrations and experiments, by importing improved

breeds of stock, introducing better implements, teaching the nature and value of manures, and by interesting itself generally in the common agriculture of the country. The cry for a loan bank proved the sincerity of the desire of the negroes for improvement. Owing to the low level of economic prosperity among them, it was almost impossible for large numbers to build up a capital sufficient to enable them to better their position, and they believed that if only they could obtain a loan they would be able to rise out of the rut of circumstance. The Government refused to initiate or associate itself with such a venture ; and in this case it acted wisely. The negroes as a whole have not reached the stage when they can undertake responsible arrangements of a monetary character. The majority are units, working for themselves and by themselves, suspicious and jealous of each other, and careless of obligations. Co-operation in effort, organisation for the common good, can be based only on mutual trust, and that is not the legacy of savagery. So long as the current education and training are insufficient to produce negroes of a type able to teach confidence to their kind the present system of individualism, with its enormous waste of energy

and its small and impermanent result, will continue. The Governor himself did much to enlighten the people as to the true principles of combination, and he preached the doctrine of self-help so well that his last public act in the colony in the early days of 1898 was to address a number of blacks who had voluntarily come together and subscribed a sum of £40 for the purpose of starting a bank. The incident was one of the most pathetic, yet one of the most significant and promising that had taken place for many years. The fact that such a project was carried some little way towards realisation among themselves, demonstrates the advance made towards that state of social existence when all things will be possible.

While these various proposals were being widely considered, it was not unnatural that the old hunger for land should take possession of many negroes. Much of the finest area of the country is in the hands of large proprietors, who refuse to sell, and the Government was urged to give them free grants of the Crown lands. Here also refusal was wise. Compliance, on the terms of the people, would have meant the transformation of the magnificent

uplands of the colony into barren slopes. But a scheme was prepared, according to which they were sold on easy and moderate terms to those desirous of settling upon them on the homestead plan. By this means it was thought the nomadic system would be checked. At first there was an obligation to build and reside on the land and to cultivate ; but the negro takes alarm at the least indication of compulsion, and he does not readily forsake his accustomed habitat. No offers were received, and the provision was subsequently withdrawn. There is now a reward of a refund of one-fifth of the purchase-money held out to any who within ten years brings one-fifth of his acreage into good bearing in kola, coffee, oranges, or other permanent crop-producing plants. These conditions suit him better, and in little over a year as many as four hundred applications from negroes have been received. There is, therefore, good reason for believing that the fixity of tenure secured in this way will result in the gradual creation on the hills of a large, intelligent, and prosperous body of yeomanry.

Judged by a qualitative standard the progress made during the decade was perhaps not very great. But the negroes had

developed a consciousness of their ignorance and an earnest desire to remove it; and to be aware of a new want is a step higher in the evolution of an individual or a race. A quantitative measure, however, gives satisfactory results. It may be noted first of all that the agricultural class of the island rose in 1891 to two hundred and seventy-one thousand two hundred and ninety-six, an increase of fourteen per cent. over the number in 1871. Sugar continued to decline, but some of the estates were planted in bananas and other products. Several parishes which formerly grew nothing but cane now grew nothing but fruit. During the ten years the exports augmented in value by over half a million sterling, and the tonnage of vessels leaving the island rose from 99,509 to 693,178. It is the black cultivators who loom up behind these figures. The rate of decrease in the output of sugar was smaller than the increase in the output of other crops, and the latter were now largely supplied by the peasantry. The export of minor products, almost entirely grown by them, rose in value in the period mentioned from £91,849 to £137,920. The statistics of cultivation bring them still more

clearly into view. The total number of acres under care in 1895 was 691,967, but only 182,000 of these were subjected to tillage, and of the latter 17 per cent. were in cane. The remainder were devoted to ordinary husbandry, and out of 92,987 holdings there were 72,655 not exceeding 5 acres, and 9,259 not exceeding 10 acres. These are chiefly in the possession of the blacks, and form the small and independent rills that, together, now largely contribute to the great stream of island industry. These facts conclusively prove that the negroes are not deserting the soil, as many assert, but have merely transferred their efforts to other industries than sugar.

The number of those engaged in industrial pursuits remained small. This class was mainly composed as before of carpenters, tailors, bricklayers, masons, shoemakers, and blacksmiths, in the order named, but the old type of workman had almost died out. The system of apprenticeship was practically obsolete, and the only training-grounds for the young were the factories of the Government and the railway, and some private workshops. The few negro lads who did pass through these became capable and diligent workers.

In the industrial schools the training was necessarily less effective. In addition to ordinary schooling the boys received instruction in the common trades, and girls in domestic work. Some were subsequently apprenticed and were noted for more than the usual dexterity and intelligence. Occasionally also one came across a lad or master-workman in the community who devoted himself to a craft and exhibited an original, if somewhat crude, conception and a patient and laborious execution. But without manual education it was useless to expect a body of competent mechanics and tradesmen to grow up in the colony. To this subject the Government has not yet given any large consideration. Neither has it attempted to foster the scanty trades that have been struggling to exist, and local manufactures are more and more being made impossible by the importation of cheap goods from abroad. These range from babies' shoes to ready-made houses which are run up with a few blows of the hammer; and they not only filch all opportunity from negroes disposed to cultivate whatever skill they possess, but place before the race a low and meretri-

cious standard of industrial quality. The craftsmen are perhaps more fully conscious of limitations and deficiencies than the tillers of the soil, and they are correspondingly more eager for self-improvement. They do not, however, obtain the same support, though their voice is also heard appealing for technical instruction and training, and some measure of encouragement and protection.

It was clear that the Government was not inclined to initiate any large schemes of legislation to meet the needs of the adult population, and the leaders of thought therefore turned their attention to the elementary schools as the sphere in which something might, with the least difficulty, be achieved. The education movement gained in impetus. A Commission had sat in 1885 and reported in the following year with the usual recommendations—compulsory attendance, abolition of fees, and the appointment of a central Board. There was also a suggestion in favour of local Boards. The tendency was unmistakably towards a National system, but for this the Government believed the country was not prepared. In 1891 the representatives of the people in the Legislative Council carried

a series of resolutions on the same lines. Still nothing was done. At last the Government was compelled to give way before the pressure of public opinion, and in 1892 a measure was passed authorising the expansion and improvement of the established arrangement. A body of influential men was appointed to advise the Government and assist the Schools department in the general administration of the law and code. Fees were abolished, and a school-tax on houses substituted. Attendance, however, remained voluntary. A sister measure prepared the way for the institution of secondary schools at the public expense, and this was the first step ever taken by the Government in the direction of the higher education of the people. Care being taken to explain the object of the tax, it was found that the negroes were perfectly content to pay it. In the year prior to the abolition of fees the number of scholars had risen to 92,135 and the average attendance to 52,983. The efficiency of the teachers and the quality of the teaching had also advanced, as was shown by the increase in the Government grants to £34,724. A new element in the shape of female teachers had also been introduced,

with advantage to the morality of the schools. Exemption from the payment of fees naturally resulted in a large accession to the number of those habitually attending. Equally natural was the recoil which came a year or two after. But the normal conditions prevailing in 1896 showed 100,000 on the books, an average attendance of 59,000, and Government grants to the amount of £47,900. Figures of this kind are not an absolute guide to the evolution of character in a people, but they tell us at least of a growing appreciation of the value of education among the parents, and therefore of the development of mental capacity. This is better understood when their economic circumstances are considered. So poor are the majority that the labour of their children is required at certain periods of the year in order to augment the family earnings. In coffee and pimento districts they are taken from the schools to pick the berries, and in the fruit parishes during crop time they are usually absent on an average about two days at the beginning of each week. The teacher will open the school-house only to see his scholars trooping past to market or depot with loads of produce on their heads. Lack of clothing

prevents many a child attending, and during periods of depression or drought hundreds remain at home because there is no food to send with them as a mid-day meal. These are only some of the causes of the irregular attendance, which is still a notable phase in school-life. But as a whole the parents show themselves willing to take advantage of the opportunity, and those who go out and in among them can tell of strange and pathetic action, of strenuous endeavour and sacrifice, of thrift and pride, during their seasons of stress, that might put to shame the people of more advanced countries. At the same time the figures speak of a new basis being laid, upon which a national character will more readily be built. It is impossible for the children to come into contact with the training and discipline of the schools without being raised a stage higher than the youth of the race have hitherto reached ; and each succeeding generation will therefore start with a better mental equipment. The system is not complete or even efficient, but those who have the largest share in carrying it on are not responsible for this result. The schools are still attached to the Churches, and are merely

assisted by the Government, which also provides for the inspection. A nominal grant was for some time made on account of buildings, always a heavy item in the cost of tropical schools, but this has been withdrawn and they are really constructed and kept in repair by the congregations, which give either money or free labour for the purpose. The burden of management rests on the ministers, who are already fully occupied with their ordinary ministerial duties. So limited is the scope of the system still, that one-third of the children of the colony between the ages of five and fourteen never come within its influence. Under such imperfect conditions the growth of education cannot but be slow, but a section of the public is extremely impatient with the result. In the confusion of tongues that prevails one can make out propositions for agricultural and industrial teaching, the elimination of the denominational element, compulsory attendance, and a reduction of the cost of the system, the last being the cry of those inimical to the negro. The central Board is devising how to meet the most reasonable of these demands. It has taken steps to begin theoreti-

cal and practical instruction bearing on agriculture and handicrafts. A "Tropical Reading-Book" has been prepared. A start has been made with a trade-school and kindergarten. These improvements are still in their earliest stage, but they indicate movement in the direction best calculated to meet the peculiar needs of a primitive race. Meanwhile the Government adheres to its conservative policy, only yielding here a little and there a little when outward opinion becomes too strong to resist. Its latest act has been to appoint a Commission to inquire into the entire system, but the chief result has been to restrict the elementary school age, and turn several thousands of children out of the schools.

The political movement was coincident with those described. The elected members who had been returned to the Legislature were white men. Whatever their private opinions were, they found it politic to assume the character of friends of the people. It was perhaps inevitable that they should become a party of opposition. So long as their resistance was directed by good sense and patriotism, it acted upon the Government, both as a wholesome check, and as a stimulus. But

it passed into a settled attitude, and determined the whole course of their policy. The official element came to be regarded as a hostile force in the country, to be criticised, harassed, and out-manœuvred on every possible occasion. Principle was sacrificed to mechanical triumph. The same conception of the relation of the two bodies grew up in the mind of the classes, and gave an impetus to the discontent which is always more or less prevalent in a mixed Creole community. One of the new demands was that the Governor should be removed from the presidency of the Legislative Council, because it was considered that his presence interfered with the freedom of debate. The request was granted by the Imperial Government, and provision was made for the nomination of a president. He was a leading physician and a trusted friend of the people. But one session was sufficient to demonstrate the un-wisdom of the step. The Council lost in dignity and self-respect, and the country itself turned upon it in derision. As this nominated president was the first, so he was the last. In the following year the Governor was quietly reinstated. But the agitation continued, and finally an increase of elected members from nine to

fourteen, or one for each parish, was conceded, but with a corresponding increase of official members. The conditions, therefore, do not differ from those which came into force in 1884. There has been expansion ; the people have more representation ; but they have no further power. The system has not worked very successfully, and a marked change has come over the public mind. The general conviction now held is that while no retrograde step should be taken, no further step in advance should be made. The belief that the existing system is sufficient for the circumstances of the colony finds no warmer supporters than the intelligent negroes, many of whom go so far as to favour a return to Crown government in its absolute form. It is a mistake to assume that they are responsible for the character of the system. The idea is firmly fixed in the British mind, and statesmen have frequently given it expression, that the negro race is at present incapable of carrying on a satisfactory representative government. This conclusion is in a sense correct, but the premises on which the belief is founded are erroneous. The conditions visible in Jamaica are not the effect of the negro vote, or of negro action of any

kind. The majority of the blacks have never paid any attention to the course of politics. They do not understand the machinery of popular government, and their ideal administration is one of which the supreme head is a strong and unprejudiced English gentleman. The 9,248 who were enfranchised at the beginning never asked for the concession. Since then, they have been the plaything of the Legislature. A reduction of the qualifications necessary for voting was secured, and the franchise conferred on every occupant of a house paying poor-rates to the extent of ten shillings per annum, the ability to read and write not being essential. The electorate rose at once to 23,000. A few years afterwards, the elected members cut off the illiterate vote. During the next session this act was rescinded, and it is doubtful if finality has been obtained. The electors now number about 30,000. A large number of these are negroes, but few take the trouble to go to the polling-booths. It is impossible to differentiate colour on such occasions, but careful observation bears out the assumption that the negro is usually a minor factor in determining the issue. In this connection it is

instructive to witness the composition of gatherings that take place in the chief centres on occasions of political interest. One's gaze travels over hundreds of brown faces, and it is only here and there that sight is caught of a darker skin. At elections, even when pressure is brought to bear upon the voters, only a third, as a rule, are interested enough to vote, and the greater number of these belong to the white and coloured classes. It is these classes, in short, that form the political majority of the country, and they are the real force behind the action of the legislature. The negro has had nothing to do with shaping the destiny of the country so far as that destiny is controlled by the exercise of the elective franchise. Neither has he had any direct hand in guiding its affairs. No black man has yet entered the Legislative Council. The greater respect in which the rising few are now held, and the growing tolerance of white and coloured sentiment have, however, made it possible for them to become candidates. Three members of the race have occupied this position. Two of these, intelligent upright men of the settler class, contested seats at the last general election, and they failed, simply because of the

superior standing of their opponents. In one case the humble negro was pitted against an old politician, a popular advocate of the Supreme Court. The former used no special effort and spent no money, yet he polled only 166 votes fewer than his opponent out of a total of 829. These are indications that the negroes will sooner or later send representatives of their own race into the Council.* The point to be noted is that the capability of the negro of Jamaica as a legislator has never once been put to the test, and that consequently the references to his political incapacity have no basis in fact. When we examine his connection with parochial government, we find additional proof of his powerlessness as a public force. Here the mechanism is simpler, and his interest has a more personal character ; yet he seldom comes forward in the exercise of his privileges. In a recent election, out of 354 electors, only seventeen went to the poll ;

* Since the above was written, the other negro referred to, Mr. Alexander Dixon, contested a by-election with a white man of considerable influence in the parish and the chairman of its Parochial Board. The negro polled 109 votes more than his opponent, and is now a member of the Legislative Council. He fills the position well, and his modesty and good sense have gained him the respect of both the official and elected members of that body.

and two of the votes were spoiled. There is, however, an increasing number of blacks who are realising what is expected of them, and who are endeavouring to discharge their obligations with conscientious care. Some of these have been elected to serve on the Boards, but they have not yet had a fair opportunity of demonstrating what they can do. They are never strong enough as a body to influence the policy of the more aggressive white and coloured elements. This admixture of racial factors on the Boards must be borne in mind when estimating the value of the system and the relation of the negro to results. The total number of members throughout the island at present is 218, but of these only 33 are pure blacks. In a very slight degree, therefore, can the latter be held responsible for the conduct of the Boards.

The administrative efficiency of these bodies is not high, but better results, perhaps, cannot yet be looked for. Subject to the supervision of the Government, they have the management of all local affairs. The routine duties, chiefly of a trivial nature, seem to exhaust the energies of the members, and there is little practical enterprise. Many of the undertakings they

have succeeded in carrying through, such as waterworks, market buildings, and minor roads and bridges, have been forced on their attention, and loans for these purposes have been advanced by the Government. Other loans, however, have been granted to meet current expenses, and the system has developed to an extent which the country does not appear to realise. On the 31st December, 1897, the amounts owed by the boards to the General Revenue reached in the aggregate to no less a sum than £114,056. Of this amount the Kingston Board was responsible for £17,935, due largely to lack of capable financing. As local health authorities the Boards have full power to carry out the sanitary laws, raise a sanitary rate, and do all that is essential for the conservation of the public health. This duty they cannot be said to perform properly. The majority of the members are ignorant of the principles of sanitation and of the arrangements in force in other countries. Not being conscious of anything to be remedied, they are content with things as they are. There is no inspection of domestic sanitation, or effort to prevent overcrowding. It is only when epidemics occur that the Island is put into sanitary

order. Even in such exigencies it is difficult to get them to act. When an outbreak of yellow fever occurred in 1897, the Board of Kingston never took the least notice of the presence of the disease. After many months of inaction the Government compelled it to move in the matter. It still failed to rise to the occasion, and the control of the sanitary department was therefore, for the time being, taken over by the Central or Governmental Board of Health. It was found that no Board had provided an isolation hospital, as enjoined by law, except Kingston, and in this case the building was incomplete and useless, and the patients had to be treated in the ordinary Government Institution, already crowded with normal types of disease. In one country parish eight persons were shut up in a small house where a girl had succumbed to the fever, and confined there for over a week, when they were released, most of them to fall ill, and one to die. No parish had an ambulance equipment, and, in the capital, patients were conveyed to the hospital in street cabs, which were immediately afterwards plying for hire. But instances of incompetence are not uncommon in the history of the Boards. A severe drought,

followed by economic privation and much suffering, recently occurred in a district inhabited by negroes. The Board, as poor-relief authority, was ignorant of anything untoward. The nature of the situation was revealed through the newspapers, but the Board refused to acknowledge the accuracy of the reports, and the Government stepped in. The Board was then forced to bestir itself, and ultimately a large sum of money was expended in relieving the destitution. Much of the failure of the Boards to meet the situation is due to their composition. As at present manned they are merely reduced facsimiles of the old House of Assembly, and personal and racial jealousies and dissensions have free play. They resent also, as that body did, the control of the distant authority. Considerable friction occasionally arises, but the Government, with its clear high vision, its greater sense of the fitness of things, and its conscious power, is always able to adopt an attitude of patient and courteous tolerance. The saving factor in the whole system is the ultimate power of the Governor. Already on four occasions he has been compelled to dissolve Boards for gross default of their duties. Two of these dissolutions occurred in the old capital parish; the

present capital was the scene of the other two, and the latest of these was brought about by persistent neglect to care for the public health. The point to be emphasised is that the responsibility for the failures has always lain with the white and coloured members. In the last case referred to there was only one negro on the Board, and he was not a native of the colony. Such breakdowns of the representative system do not therefore prove the inability of the negro to govern. What they prove is the inability of the native white and coloured men to govern. The truth is that the negroes have never had an opportunity on the Boards of showing of what they are capable. Individually they make excellent members. One interesting example is furnished by the Board of St. Thomas, three members of which are negroes, including the chairman, a modest, intelligent gentleman, who has been elected without opposition to that position for the fourth time. The Board is one of the best conducted in the island. St. Thomas was the scene of the tragedy of 1865, and the Board meets at the court-house where the first shot was fired, and where Gordon's body swung lifeless in the sea-wind.

The pioneer stage in the history of the

Churches had been passed. The missionaries had become ministers, and had settled down into an established position, governed by fixed and regular methods. There was less aggressive work, attention being mainly devoted to the task of moulding the material that was now permanently within reach. From this the excrescences of heathenism had been largely removed. What was now required was patient insistence on right thought and conduct. The bush had been cleared from mind and heart, and the soil prepared, and intensive culture had begun. This policy, however, has always been specially characteristic of some denominations, as, for instance, the Presbyterian, in which quality of attainment is considered more essential than mechanical increase. In the non-established Anglican Church the differentiation of educative function went on at a rapid rate under the guidance of one of the strongest and ablest men who have ever devoted themselves to the higher interests of the colony. It established a theological college, a deaconess institution, orphanages, and other organisations for the acceleration of the common work. The numerical results, accordingly, were not so marked as formerly. From 1885 to 1895

the increase in the membership of all the churches was only 18,000, or at the rate of 1,800 per annum, whereas the population had been increasing at the rate of from 8,000 to 9,000 per annum. The total number of members in the latter year was, approximately, 131,800. A much larger proportion comes within the influence of the Churches, but the fact remains that there is a very considerable number of the people who exist outside the area occupied by the religious forces, and who are not, even indirectly, affected by their presence. These cannot be termed lapsed masses, so far, at any rate, as the negroes are concerned. They have never fallen from a higher estate, and are unconscious of their position. In course of time the conditions that prevail abroad will no doubt also obtain in Jamaica. In some denominations discipline is strict, and persons are dismissed from attendance on ordinances for flagrant breaches of the moral law. Ostracism of this kind is extremely repugnant to the negro, and many repent and return, or frequent less fastidious churches; but others remain altogether outside, and these are gradually forming the nucleus of a derelict class. The black and coloured elements were

being introduced more and more into the highest service, though on a lower financial basis than the white element, the acknowledged purpose being to grant the Churches full native autonomy. The Moravians were gradually being detached from the parent body, and the Presbyterians of Scotland were also decreasing the amount of their contributions, and pressing their mission to take up the responsibility of independence. Only one-third of the clergy of the Anglican Church were now English-born, the remainder being either coloured or black. At the same time there was a steady growth of interest in foreign work, despite the heavy calls for local expenses. Taking a single illustration, we find the Presbyterian Church, which is composed almost entirely of negroes of the peasant class, sending aid to the mission in Old Calabar, supporting a Zenana missionary in Rajputana, and carrying on by means of trained Hindus a successful work among the East Indian population in the island itself. There is one congregation, black in skin and poor in pocket, in which every member on the roll gives an offering to the mission fund. Again, the ministers were taking a larger share in public work. They were the motive power

behind reform. With others more or less associated with the Churches, they sat on all the boards of Government institutions, and on many private boards, and they also entered the sphere of local politics. In some districts, in 1885, they were the only possible candidates for the parochial boards, and, in the special circumstances, they accepted the responsibility. At the first election twenty-four were returned, and at present the number serving is thirty-four. These represent the highest efficiency and disinterestedness, and they are the chief protectors of the real and abiding interests of the general population. On the whole, the churches of Jamaica continue to witness to the high character of the negroes. These form the vast majority of the members, and many of them are settlers and labourers who earn no more than ninepence and one-and-sixpence per day, and often less. In the Presbyterian denomination the average offering per member for all purposes in 1896 was 14s. 9d. In the Anglican Church the commonest experience is that men in work and health give 12s. and their wives 6s. per annum. It is clear that behind such a result there must exist considerable moral enlightenment and force.

While the Churches were thus being securely established, a new factor entered the religious life of the island. This was the Salvation Army. It has not been successful in its career, and has merely brought into vogue a number of loose and emotional organisations that form and break and re-form whenever a leader of sufficient power appears. The Army movement proper is a dangerous one to introduce into a primitive community where there are no lapsed masses to reclaim. Its agents work upon the feeling of the people, but they have little or no opportunity of following up the effect made, and of hardening it into permanency. After the excitement is past, those affected drift further back than before. The negroes can never be evangelised in such a fashion. What they require is a slow matter-of-fact process of teaching and guidance and discipline. It is not in the wind or in the earthquake or in the fire that success with them lies, but in the still small voice.

CHAPTER VII.

ATTAINMENT IN CHARACTER.

(1885—1895-99.)

THE real progress of a people is not to be gauged by their material prosperity, but by their attainment in character. This is specially the case when they are still lingering on the lower levels of civilization. We have now, therefore, to inquire what changes have been taking place in the moral nature of the negro during the outward stir and movement of the past decade. It has been the period when the pressure of the higher social force has been most widely dominant, and it is necessary first to obtain some idea of the exact nature of this force. Apart from the negroes themselves and the small band of missionaries who labour among them, the inhabitants of the Island may be cast into several divisions. There are the pure Creoles of British origin, including the old British aristocracy, surviving still in reduced

numbers ; the Creoles styled English, but who are the descendants of Jewish immigrants from Portugal and Spain, and of refugees from royal France ; the coloured population ; the newer colonists, chiefly from England and Scotland, and present in every sphere ; the English officials ; and lastly, the colonies of East Indians, Chinese, and others. To all these classes the negroes are more or less repugnant. The planters still cherish their traditional antipathy, and continue to use them as beasts of burden. The alien Creoles constitute a large section of the community, and the Jews are specially numerous and influential. Exempt from all disabilities, they mix freely in the social life of the colony, and control the major portion of the mercantile trade. But they stand aloof from the negro, and have no dealings with him save in the capacity of employers of labour. The prejudice is, perhaps, most keen among the coloured classes ; wherever there is the cross of blood, there also subsists the deep-seated dislike and contempt in inverse ratio to the degree of propinquity. The recent colonists seldom belong to the higher type of manhood. The mother country does not send out her best sons to the tropics ; they

go where brain and sinew can be put to more strenuous use. At the outset they are usually unbiassed in their relations with the negroes. But as they settle and take root they begin to discover that colour and race are the most powerful influences regulating the destiny of the colony. Gradually assimilating the ideas of those around them, they, too, eventually come to regard the existence of the blacks as an evil, and a problem, and to act in accordance with the belief. On the other hand, the officers of the Colonial service are under no necessity to take part in the ordinary life of the country, and many of them are able to retain their racial sympathy, while preserving their national characteristics and habits. Some of the more high-minded look upon themselves as the protectors and educators of a primitive people. The presence of the foreign races has little or no effect on the blacks. They do not intermarry, though they readily fraternise on the same level, and they may be dropped out of mind. Broadly speaking, the position of all these classes is governed by the caste of colour. Based on sentiment, colour-caste is by no means so rigid in its application as the religious castes of the world, and society is established on a

system of mutual tolerance, which, however, has its well-understood limitations. In many spheres these are still strictly observed, as, for example, in some Anglican churches, where the whites occupy the front and the negroes the rear pews. But, as a rule, the latter never place themselves in any situation that would antagonise the whites, and the easy relations that exist may be expected to continue so long as the humbler race remains as ignorant and self-conscious as it is at present. None of the classes mentioned can be said to be a model for it, in social virtue. Comparatively few English residents attend church services or show an example of real Christian living. Only a very small proportion of negroes ever witness English character and life in its natural and best form ; what they see is an artificial presentment created, half-unconsciously, to impress and awe an inferior people. The Creoles of foreign descent are, on the whole, equally valueless as a pattern of the highest moral worth. Nor does association with the greater number of coloured natives improve the character of the negro. He gains, in short, nothing indirectly from those above him.

Neither does he gain anything directly. To

one accustomed to the altruistic movements in other countries, the absence of voluntary endeavour for the promotion of his well-being among all classes, outside of the Churches, is remarkable. There are no organisations at work in the moral region, no societies for the spread of intellectual enlightenment, no agencies providing wholesale amusements, no associations seeking to ameliorate the condition of the outcast and the criminal.* Both white and coloured possess the qualities of the climate. They have kindly feelings and hospitable ways, but egoism is the essential principle regulating their lives, and they seek mainly their private gain and pleasure. They stand accordingly on the lowest rung of human existence, and their activities are in correspondence with their ideal. In all the amenities and graces of life they come short of a reasonable standard. Public spirit is almost unknown. There is neither civic ambition and sense of responsibility, nor efficient administration and service in the interests of the taxpayers. The streets and lanes, the stores and offices of even the

* Since the above was written, a Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society has been established, drawing, however, its main support from the Churches.

wealthiest merchants—all the surroundings in which the daily life of the community is carried on—are squalid and mean. High principle in business is rare. Order, method, and discipline, in the proper sense, are seldom enforced. There is no attempt to train or influence the labour employed. And thus it has been from Emancipation, and in this shiftless and disorderly sphere the negro still moves and works. To his master he is merely so much brute force. He is used as a mule is used, and, like a mule, is abused whenever in his dull way he commits a mistake. It is the same in the domestic realm. A better environment and a more refined influence prevail there; but in few dwellings is the negro more to the occupants than an animated machine. Many Jamaican mistresses appear to be incapable of understanding and appreciating their servants. They recognise their low racial status, as their treatment of them demonstrates, yet expect them to realise their own idea of service. The only effect of this attitude on the part of the whites is to stupefy the negroes. The lash of the tongue has been substituted for the lash of the whip, and the result is the same. Hence it is that we hear so much

about their faults and so little about their virtues.

When these faults are examined at close range they are seen to be divisible into two kinds. Faults are relative. They are lapses from normal conduct. When judging the negro the whites employ the only standard known to them, that is, their own. But many of the shortcomings of the negro are merely manifestations of his radical nature, and they should be viewed in the light of the means and opportunities of improvement he has enjoyed. Had a good pattern been continuously set before him, he would more swiftly have overcome his original defects. He has had no such example, and he cannot imitate what he does not see. Here we come to the second type of imperfections, or those which have been grafted on his character since his sojourn in the island. His highest standard has always been the lowest of the whites, and he copies what he hears and sees. All their vices in morals and manners he has annexed, quite innocently, because he is ignorant of their ethical significance. They form in his life a replica of that half of the white tropical character which is never shown in Britain, but which is betrayed in this dark

reflection. Naturally they are revealed to the greatest extent in the class which has been most dependent upon the white. Wherever the negro is left quietly to the prolonged influence of refined and cultured individuals, and is more directly subject to the moral discipline of the Churches, he has made rapid progress in throwing off his aboriginal traits. He is, in short, a mirror in whose depths we discover the character of the impressions by which he is most affected. On the whole, the irresistible conclusion is that the social influence of the ordinary white, while necessarily imparting a certain degree of superficial polish, has hitherto hindered his development in all those qualities associated with the highest civilization.

These drawbacks notwithstanding, the character of the negro has continued to be affected by the scattered factors of good in the island, and to open out in the right direction. We shall first consider his efficiency as a worker, and afterwards discuss his higher qualities. The most difficult problem of the tropics, according to the white economist, has always been the labour problem. The negro, he states, is naturally indolent. He can scarcely be got to work, and when he condescends to

do so he cannot be depended on, and is apt to be off at any moment. When in regular occupation he is idle and careless. His relation to the sugar estates is claimed to be the most convincing illustration of this characteristic; and the necessity for the importation of coolies is pointed to as a proof of his incurable inefficiency and sloth. This estimate of him has long been accepted as final truth by the white nations of the world. If we pass behind the surface, however, we find ourselves face to face with several conditions which considerably modify this idea. It has been indicated that during the first half of his period of freedom he had no inducement to do more than was absolutely necessary to supply his bare personal needs, to pay his taxes, and to contribute his dues to the church. He did not object to work as work. But he was a child, and the return to a primitive environment, with its narrow outlook and absence of wants, and his hatred of the sugar estates, then the only field for labour, combined to keep him in a state of comparative inaction. No one with the least knowledge of the circumstances can assert that this attitude prevails to-day. With the widening of opportunity and the growth of

aspiration during recent years has come a larger and more intelligent capacity for work, as the term is understood by the white man. The broad fact is undeniable. But the antagonistic influences remain what they have always been. In the first place there is the memory of their bondage. The men who sweated in the slave fields have not yet died out, and their presence serves to preserve still keen the shame and bitterness of the past. Ignorant and dull as the negro is, he resents the injustice and indignity of forced labour, and anything approaching to it is quietly and resolutely avoided. Digging and hoeing in concert bears too close a similitude to the old-time tasks to be taken kindly to. The white has forgotten, or does not realise, what slavery meant to the negroes, and, unconscious of any feeling of the kind, he attributes their disinclination to mere laziness. It is a daily experience to hear them cursed for it. But, one may ask, who set the standard for the black? If labour has been degraded, whose fault is it? Not that of the negro, but of the civilized white, who made it synonymous with insensate toil, and connected it with bestial conditions of social living. It is not surprising,

therefore, that the desire of the children is to escape beyond the confines of an occupation which suggests a state of servile degradation. The youth of the United Kingdom desert the country for the town with less reason. Behind the negro lad lies the black terror of slavery, and the labour that makes him in the eyes of the world a beast and not a man; before him the felicity of a higher existence. We cannot blame him if he flies from the field as from an evil thing. Here also we have the reason for the aversion of the negro to industrial and predial indenture. He has respect for the whites, but he also entertains a secret distrust which prevents him committing himself absolutely to their power. The attempt to induce him to work under contract on the land has, therefore, been a failure. In 1891 a law was enacted enabling negroes to enter into annual agreements with planters, subject to the supervision of the Immigration Department, as is the case with coolies, and a bonus of £2 at the end of the year was held out as an inducement. Not a single negro has taken advantage of it. It is not the work in itself that deters them, but the associations connected with this principle of labour. It is a

very human feeling, and as honourable to them as it would be to the whites in the same circumstances. In the next place, the negro has no special immunity from the influence of the climate ; it acts alike upon all races, and reduces to a state of lethargy even the most energetic of the higher race. Yet it is remarkable how he overcomes inertia when he is stimulated by the same hope as the latter. Here we strike perhaps the most important fact in connection with the question, but one most commonly passed over by the casual glance of the world. This is the matter of compensation.

The negroes have been free for sixty years ; they are advancing and becoming a nation. They are evolving new ideas and wants ; their range of living is expanding. With a spur to action the more intelligent, as we have seen, are developing into a peasant proprietary. But the purchasing power of the majority remains what it has always been, and with very many it has decreased. At Emancipation the price of labour was ninepence per day for women, and one shilling or one-and-sixpence for men. It is nominally the same still, but in many districts it is only sixpence

for women, and ninepence or one shilling for men, while in times of depression women will take fourpence-halfpenny, the rate for children. The labour is the hardest, in proportion, of any wage-earners in the world. In every country during the century remuneration for both skilled and unskilled labour has risen, but in Jamaica the high-water mark has receded. This, however, is not all. The system of fining is universal, and some employers cut down wages on the slightest pretext and in contravention of the elementary principles of justice. It is practically robbing a child of its small savings for indiscretions which it commits in its ignorance and helplessness. Like the child, the negro does not resist, but the system alienates him still further from regular and efficient service, and forces him into a condition of entire or partial independence. He feels it better to grow a few provisions and bananas and be free, than earn one shilling or one-and-sixpence a day and be more or less a slave. Accordingly it is usual to find him both a cultivator and a labourer. His ground is a stand-by, and when public works are going on and the pay is good, he leaves it, allowing it even to go out of cultivation, in order to labour

steadily and efficiently for the higher wage. This is the cause of the irregular labour supply which is so commonly put down to his discredit. The fault does not lie with him but with the whites, all of whom are in a position to pay an adequate wage. The source of the evil is not the economic status of the latter, but the sentiment which regards the negro as still a slave, and the desire to obtain his services at the lowest possible cost. The same principle rules labour in the domestic sphere. Most servants are paid a wage upon which they can barely subsist. Those who are "found" in food receive from two to three shillings per week, those who are not, from four to six shillings, still lower rates obtaining in the country districts. There is, therefore, no inducement for them to attach themselves to their employers and become proficient in their duties.

Again, the race is underfed. Waste of tissue goes on at a rapid rate in the tropics, and a substantial and nutritious diet is necessary for the due sustenance of the body. But the majority of the negroes are unable to obtain the quantity and the quality of food it is essential for them to consume. They are

restricted to a few articles, and they have not the knowledge to enable them to make the best use of these. What they assimilate is sufficient to keep life going, but nothing more. This is specially true of the peasantry, who are vegetarians from ages of habit. Speaking physiologically they are half-starved. In appearance strong and well-developed, they lack elemental stamina and reserve power. As the result, therefore, of long fasts and improper feeding they are frequently dyspeptics. The indolence which irritates the white is often nothing but the lethargy of weakness and exhaustion. Like dumb animals they do not complain, and the penetration of the world never goes deep where they are concerned. There is also, no doubt, among the young a distaste for labour in itself. Many attribute this wholly to education. But it is a tendency visible in most countries, and is inevitable in a primitive people. With such it is the result of an opening and aspiring mind, and an indication that they are progressing. The remedy is not less education, but more of the right kind.

Such are some of the factors that combine to bring about what is called the labour problem.

It must be borne in mind that there is no organisation or understanding among the blacks ; they act individually and according to impulse. If the indispensable conditions were present they would always be willing to work ; and there would be no labour problem. Chief of these is certain and adequate compensation. No man loves his country more than the negro, yet thousands went to Central America and toiled in the canal trenches there, because the wages were to them a sufficient recompense. It is difficult, sometimes impossible, for ordinary employers to coax him to leave his own district in the island for predial labour elsewhere. During a recent drought, when many in an isolated part of the country were suffering severe privation, they refused to proceed to estates and fruit fields in other parishes. They were suspicious and afraid. Yet when the railway extensions were being executed by an American Syndicate, thousands left their holdings and wrought happily and well on the line for good wages ; and the present manager of the railway speaks highly of them as labourers. They were equally eager to be engaged on the sewerage works in Kingston, a Government undertaking ; and the officials

of the Public Works Department throughout the island have never found any difficulty in securing their services. In all these cases the remuneration is satisfactory, and they are sure of receiving every penny of what they earn. The testimony of all fair-minded employers is the same. And when in good condition they make the finest tropical labourers in the world. They are obedient and cheerful, and if not so careful as the East Indian coolie the blame is not theirs. They have never received any instruction. "Taken on" as a beast of burden, their work is mechanical and of no educative value. The excellent effect which training has on their efficiency is seen in those who have become seamen and soldiers. The first and second battalions of the West India Regiment are almost wholly recruited from Jamaica blacks, and so well have they suited the purpose that a third battalion has been recently added. The men are obedient, hardy and brave, and form as good soldiers as one could wish to lead in the hot regions of the world. On the sewerage works their value as workmen is due to the fact that the English engineers and overseers took pains at first to teach them their duties. It is the same

everywhere. When the wages of domestics are above the normal low standard they have an incentive to work, and many develop into proficient servants, and settle down into a life-long connection with their employers.

Even under the existing conditions it is remarkable what the negro will do. Twice every week thousands of men, women and children travel on foot ten, twenty, and thirty miles to market and back with loads on their heads, and think nothing of it—simply to earn a shilling or two. Where attachments are formed to white people, no work is too laborious for them to accomplish, and in such a case they often ignore remuneration. Among those, especially, who have become dependent on a stated wage, and in the towns these form a growing class, we find examples which disprove the assumption that the negro is inherently lazy. We take two out of many. The first is the case of negro compositors in a newspaper office. Beginning at 8 A.M. these continue at work, with an hour's interval, until their duties are finished, and when this occurs may be seen from the following table showing the quitting time for a typical week :—

| DAY. | COMPOSITORS. | FORME IMPOSERS. |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Monday 3rd . . | 12 midnight | 2.30 A.M. Tuesday. |
| Tuesday 4th . . | 10 P.M. | 12.30 A.M. Wednesday. |
| Wednesday 5th . | 1.30 A.M. Thursday | 3.30 A.M. Thursday. |
| Thursday 6th. . | 8.40 P.M. | 11.30 P.M. |
| Friday 7th . . | 11 P.M. | 1 A.M. Saturday. |
| Saturday 8th . . | 9 P.M. | 11 P.M. |

The elder of the negro imposers has been living this kind of life for twenty years ; he is married and has brought up his children respectably and given them a good education. No compositor receives more than twenty shillings per week, a sum which has a much lower purchasing power than in England. The routine never varies, and it is not surprising that their interest and energies often flag. It is not that they are unconscious of their position. They are constantly turning it over in their mind and scheming how to improve it. But they are face to face with a wall of circumstance which they find it impossible to surmount, and time after time they lie beaten at the base. The point, however, is that they work longer and harder than most white men, and that, on the whole, they discharge their duties faithfully and well.

The second case is that of the drivers and conductors of the street cars, an intelligent and courteous class of men. These start work at

6 A. M. and leave off at 9.45 P.M. with intervals for meals ; on Sundays there are longer periods of rest. Their wages do not exceed fourteen shillings per week.* The theory of idleness

* Since the above was written the electric trolley system of street tramways has been introduced, and Mr. H. Holgate, the general manager, a Canadian, has supplied the following note : "Only one white man was engaged in the construction of the large steel conduit which conveys the water to the power-house—one of the largest pipes in the world. The plates were assembled, placed in position, erected, and riveted, by native workmen, under the supervision of the white man. The latter states that the workmen learned the work as quickly and did it as satisfactorily as any workmen he has ever handled on similar undertakings in any part of the world. It has been found throughout the whole of the construction of the tramway system that the native labourer under good, strict, intelligent supervision, is an excellent man who well repays any initial trouble in the way of instruction and discipline. The prevalent idea that he cannot be trained to do good work is without foundation. Our labourers were made to understand that they must do as they were told. They had, at first, a habit of coming to work on Tuesday morning and working to Friday night, and were childishly independent, but firm handling soon brought them into regular ways ; we paid them well and we had no difficulty in getting sixty hours work per week out of them. The best and most reliable of the workmen were the pure blacks. This was found to be invariably the case. Their power of endurance is not so great as the white man's in northern latitudes. We found that two-thirds of the day's work was done in the first five hours. The food and the lack of general training are no doubt responsible for this result. Considering all the circumstances I conclude that if the black man is treated as a man, and not as mechanical power merely, he will, as a rule, repay the employer of labour for a little patience and care. I find among them as bright fellows as among white labourers. Our motormen are all black men, and we have but one motor inspector, and he is black. We found the latter a handy

cannot, in short, be substantiated. The actual circumstances of the negro's life in every sphere, stripped of all superficial appearance, demonstrate that he is capable of, and has already acquired the habit of, intelligent and continuous industry. In proportion as he feels more secure in his place in the world as an individual and a sharer in the national existence, and as his ideas expand and his wants increase, he is recognising the dignity and nobility of toil, and becoming reconciled to a plain life of agricultural and industrial activity. But as long as the compensation for hired labour remains at the figure which has prevailed since he issued out of slavery, and as long as there is an acre of spare land in the island, the present condition of things will persist, and we shall continue to trace its effects, as we trace trails witnessing to blood and suffering, through all the phases of negro existence.

In the higher social qualities there has been unmistakable advance. The negroes continue to be the most law-abiding people in the empire.

mechanic and trained him to his work with satisfactory results. A white man who is patient and straightforward in his dealings with black labour will not experience any more difficulty with it than with any other class of labour—in fact, I believe, he will experience less."

This is due partly to the pacific element in tropical character, and partly to an acquired respect for the law and authority of the white. Fond of argument, rather than of action, they resort to litigation as a solution of most of their difficulties. The majority of offences committed are of a minor nature, and some of them are the fruit of past ill-treatment and neglect. Predial larceny, disorderly conduct, and vagrancy, are the commonest, and the first is the distinctive crime of the colony. The chief sufferers in this respect are the large landowners and those small settlers whose fields are at a distance from their homes. The system of agriculture places a premium upon theft. Everywhere one sees bananas ripening within easy reach; cocoanuts or dyewoods lie heaped on the open ground; ripe coffee or cocoa or kola hang over the roadway; orange-trees, with their wealth of fruit, cover lonely pastures; and close at hand are markets where all produce can be profitably disposed of. It is too much to expect an irresponsible race to live amidst conditions of this kind and remain immaculate in conduct. If the orchards and fruit-gardens of the United Kingdom were left unprotected by walls and hedges, and no watch were kept, few

crops would be taken off by the owners. During the slave period, the negroes were allowed to take canes and new sugar from the estates as perquisites, and the custom may have made a more than passing impression on their character. Among domestic servants and others there is a disposition to appropriate food and small articles, but they rarely purloin money or objects of value. For a race possessing only a rudimentary moral sense, their integrity is remarkable. The general sobriety of conduct is well tested at seasons of popular rejoicing. It is on record that during the three months of the Exhibition there was not one arrest for drunkenness or disorderliness. In the Christmas week of 1892, there was not a single person in custody for misbehaviour or assault in the parish of St. Catherine, which contains the old capital, and has a population of 65,000. Again, no larger assemblies ever gathered in Jamaica by day and night under circumstances more favourable for indulging in excess than on the occasion of the celebration in Kingston of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee, but there was not the slightest departure from public order, and the police had practically nothing to do. There were only a few arrests for personal

misconduct, and but one case of drunkenness. So free is the negro from a tendency to lawlessness and violence, and so instant is his respect for superior birth and station, that any white person of either sex, young or old, may walk alone from one end of the island to the other, and meet nothing but courtesy and kindness.

In knowledge of the principles of wholesome living there has also been advance. The fatalistic idea that sickness is natural and inevitable, is giving place to the right view, that it is a violation of law and preventible. But the practical results have necessarily been small. The sense of smell is still imperfect, and many live in an atmosphere surcharged with effluvia that would overpower an average white, and do not appear to be conscious of the fact. Public lessons in hygiene and sanitation are few. The installation of a sewerage system in Kingston by the Government is going on, and will bring enlightenment to hundreds; but, as a rule, the only ideas obtained on this subject are gained casually from contact with the individual white. No effort is made to train the people by enforcing the sanitary and building laws. Many instances might be given to illustrate the indifference of the authorities in

this direction. As already stated, the negro peasantry, women and children most of them, come into the markets twice every week. They have always been in the habit of sleeping overnight in the open air. Yielding to the pressure of philanthropic opinion, the Kingston Parochial Board decided to erect a shelter for these people, and charge them one penny each for admission. The proposal met with some criticism. It was asserted that they would never consent to relinquish their freedom and pay the price required. The institution, it was prophesied, would be a failure. But it was a success, and soon became self-supporting. The negro is always willing to adopt the conveniences of civilization, if he is given a fair opportunity of doing so. The provision made is inadequate to meet the periodical inflow into the city, but the Board is quite satisfied with what it has achieved. Any night preceding market-day numbers may still be seen sleeping side by side upon the open piazzas. During the "seasons" recently the writer counted, at midnight, a score of women and children huddled together on one of these stone shelves, exposed to the driving rain. The same conditions prevail throughout the country, but no

other Board has been moved to concede the protection which common humanity suggests as absolutely necessary for these providers of the public food.

It must be said, however, that thousands of huts afford scarcely better shelter to the inmates. In the circumstances, the mortality is naturally large. It is greatest immediately after the spring and autumn rains, when the normal temperature is disturbed, and disease fastens on the weak points in the negro constitution. The majority of deaths are those of children. In the year 1896-97, nearly half—7,266—out of the total number—15,939—were those of children under five years of age. Out of every one hundred infants born, 17·5 failed to live for a year, and 26·8 died between one and five years. These figures do not include still-births, which cannot be computed. The official returns prove that a heavier mortality is incident to illegitimate child-life, a result of insufficient and improper feeding, lack of care, and occasionally of darker practices. While resort is still had to the bush doctors, the racial knowledge of herbal medicines is gradually being lost. The official medical system continues to work well within the field it covers,

but that is limited. Thirty-five district officers were appointed at its inauguration in 1868, but though the population has increased by 200,000 since then, the number at present is only thirty-six, or one practitioner to every 19,400 inhabitants. In the country districts the classes reached are the affluent, the very poor—by means of tickets issued by the local authorities—and the paupers, but not the lower middle class. For these the fees are too high. Of the number of persons who died in 1896–97, stated above, 11,678, or 75·1 per cent. had no professional attendance at the last. Outside of Kingston, the percentage was as high as 80, and the majority were negroes.

A promise of better things among the people is found in many minor developments. Wider attention is being given to personal cleanliness. The ablution on Sundays has become an almost universal habit, and in the homes of thousands it has developed into a daily bath. It is now only among the lower classes that one is offended by that odour which is erroneously supposed to be a physiological peculiarity of the race. It is the result of large sweat glands, and a skin habitually unclean. The whites themselves are liable, to a certain

extent, to offend in the same manner by neglecting the regular cleansing of their bodies. Here and there one observes a disinclination to remain in insanitary surroundings, and an effort to improve the conditions of the home, usually on the lines adopted by the white. The same spirit of imitation is manifested in the rearing and training of the family. There is an element of pathos in the pride taken by the blacks in these things, but they are encouraging signs of progress. Dress is at present their chief social passion, and the evolution in colour and style has been most marked. It continues to be from the complex to the simple, from the garish to the chaste. The men wear ordinary English attire, even sometimes to the top hat and frock coat. The women are usually clad in white skirts and print blouses. On Sundays the majority appear in white, relieved by coloured ribbons or sash, or a spray of flowers; the remainder, especially in the towns, imitate the ladies of the upper classes. During the Christmas season gayer costumes are common, though even then the general tendency is towards the adoption of neutral shades and a quieter style. As they choose their own stuffs and patterns, this indicates the growth of

the æsthetic faculty. There is, however, a natural harmony between bright hues and a brilliant environment, and it would be a loss to the eye if the approximation to the English model should become too close. More money is spent on the adornment of the person than in the gratification of the appetite; but in this direction, also, an advance towards greater refinement is visible. There is a continuous increase in the importation of the better classes of food, which can now be obtained at every small store in the interior, and numerous families are regularly varying their native diet with nutritious articles from abroad. The process is, no doubt, assisted by the general custom of white mistresses "finding" (or supplying food to) their servants, who thus learn to relish substances to which, otherwise, they would not get accustomed. The low standard of wage, however, acts everywhere as a check upon the development of taste.

In such matters progress has been more or less a result of the coercion of external forces. But in the improvement of domiciliation we see the outcome of native energy. Nothing can demonstrate better the advance made than the figures of the census returns. Between

1881 and 1891 there was an increase of 30 per cent. in the number of houses classified as shingled and floored. In the next class, or those floored, but merely thatched, the increase was 8,300, while in the lowest class or those unfloored and thatched there was a decrease of 6,892. These three movements are still going on, showing that the people are gradually abandoning their primitive huts for dwellings of a more civilized order. The mountain negroes have risen to a higher stage. They give attention to the appearance of their cottages, very many of which possess a piazza or verandah, are prettily painted, and have flower gardens in front. On the other hand there are still many thousand families, mostly negroes, living in structures scarcely different from those of their African prototypes. It is not absolutely certain that the house tax or poor rate is, as is alleged, an obstacle in the way of a more rapid improvement taking place. Some negroes deny it, and state that the real hindrance is the lack of knowledge, ambition, and energy on the part of their humbler kindred, who also dislike to arouse the jealousy of their neighbours. It is probable that the truth lies between these two statements, and that the

tax is with many a handicap on their progress. It must, however, be remembered that the negroes in the country districts do not, as a rule, rent their dwellings. These they must build for themselves, and their means do not permit them to construct other than the humblest and tiniest habitations. This is a circumstance often overlooked in the consideration of the question. But there is much force in the assertion that the masses are satisfied with things as they are, though the blame must rest largely upon the conditions of their environment. The inhabitants of more rigorous regions are forced into habits of self-help, thrift and advancement, but in the bountiful tropics the factor of compulsion is eliminated, and the absence of it affects more or less the development of the higher social virtues. In such a sphere, where the essentials of life are so simple and so few, the practice of economy, for instance, is almost unnecessary. To find so many natives rising above the overpowering tendency to remain on a hand-to-mouth level demonstrates the possession of innate force of character. In 1896 the number of accounts voluntarily opened in the Government Savings Bank had risen to 28,000, of which 19,929

belonged to persons with deposits of less than £5. The increase in the small accounts alone has been 10,000. The same suggestive story is told by the operations of the Penny Savings Bank, no fewer than 21,974 of the humble or negro class taking advantage of it in the year 1895. In the same year in three parishes traversed by a branch of the railway extensions the deposits in the Savings Bank were £5,000 in excess of the deposits in the same area for the previous year. The labourers were almost all negroes. And still higher traits are making their appearance. We have seen that the principle of co-operation has been applied by the negroes themselves to the operations of agriculture, and in other spheres of life the laws of elementary combination are being gradually put into force. No effort, so far, has succeeded without the guidance and supervision of the whites. A Choral Union, conducted by a negro, is the only organisation that has had a fairly satisfactory record. At present a Union of the teachers of the Island, directed by whites, is one of the most promising exhibitions of the spirit of mutual confidence and help. The ready acceptance of negro pastors, and incidents like the re-

election of the black chairman of the Parochial Board of St. Thomas, indicate the willingness of the people to trust when trust is justified. Hitherto there have been very few of this type of men, because the conditions have not been such as to produce them. Those who have been able to secure united action for a time have appealed, as a rule, to the sinister instincts of the race. But it takes greater faith to follow when the lead is upward. "Colour for colour" is the cry of the people in their passion; it has no power in the sphere where, in cool judgment, they exercise their civil and personal rights. The truth is, that the negro knows his limitations, and knows that at present they are the limitations of all, and as he mistrusts himself, so he will not trust others. This feeling will pass away with the uplifting of the race and the increase in number of men of life-long integrity. It will, however, take some time before they repose in themselves the confidence which they do in the whites, and their progress in this direction will measure their progress in all forms of social and individual activity.

The spread of knowledge is weakening allegiance to the grosser forms of superstition. Superstition is ignorance. With a mind like a

dark cell the average negro is still a prey to the most illogical fears. At the beginning of the decade he imagined that some naval manœuvres were hostile demonstrations against his peace and liberty. Some years afterwards, when agricultural fairs were sought to be established in his interest, he refused to take advantage of them because he believed the Government wished to catalogue his stock for the purpose of increasing the taxes. Later still, grotesque ideas prevailed in some districts regarding the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of Her Majesty's accession to the throne. To understand this state of mind we must bear in mind the isolation of the race. Britain lies four thousand miles in the distance. To the negroes who are able to conceive of it at all it is a confused dream of greatness. To all others it is simply the person of a good and powerful Queen. The majority live hidden away in the bush and never come into prolonged contact with the educated and disciplined section of the community. They seldom see any new thing or hear of any new idea or receive any fresh stimulus. They work in their fields by day, and in the evening sit by their hut-doors, around them always the great silence and

loneliness of the tropics. There is the market and the Sunday service, and an occasional harvest festival or other gathering in the churches; but these incidents are all that stir the desolate tranquility of their lives. Railways and post-offices have broken into large sections of the country, bringing them into contact with intelligence and system; but as a rule they are still shut off from all the strenuous influences of life. Yet the light and movement of the world are slowly penetrating into their solitudes, and the old wildfire rumours are becoming less common and extreme. And so with superstition. Rooted in their nature by centuries of accumulated habit it is, however, far more difficult to eradicate. In 1885 obeahism was prevalent, though not so rank in its manifestations as before. It was then generally believed that "buckra could not hurt obeahman." Even constables and warders were chary of handling these men, and sometimes through fear connived at their escape. At the Exhibition of 1891 above the entrance to a place of amusement on the grounds appeared the phrase "the living obeah," descriptive of the illusion which formed the entertainment. So great was the awe created

among the country blacks by this inscription that the authorities were obliged to blot out the word "obeah," and the legend remained thus mutilated during the remainder of the season. A collection of articles taken from convicted obeahmen was also removed in deference to the same apprehension. But these very facts seemed to create a sense of shame. When, later on, laws were passed to deal more effectively with the practices of professional obeah-workers there was a feeling of general satisfaction throughout the country. Provision was made for the flogging of offenders, a punishment greatly dreaded by the negroes and coloured class. The measures were supported by the intelligent blacks, and they co-operated with the police in carrying them out. Numbers of obeahmen were caught red-handed, convicted and whipped, and the foundations of the great imposture began to break up. The newspapers gave publicity to the evidence at the trials, and it was widely brought home to the people that the men of whom they stood so much in fear were nothing but vulgar mercenaries. In few of the cases which have come to light has any element of pathos or tragedy lent dignity to the sordid details. The know-

ledge of native poisons has almost died out ; arsenic, antimony, mercury, and powdered glass are known, but are rarely used. During the last ten years no poison of any kind has been discovered in the obeah preparations which have been seized by the police. The stock-in-trade is much the same as it was in slave times. Here, for example, is the official inventory of a recent capture : "Two packs of cards, a looking-glass, a doll with feathers in its head, some dried scorpions, a dried toad, a bottle containing a very bad smelling liquid, and two tins of powder." The police sent the bottle and the tins of powder to the Island chemist, who reported as follows : "The bottle contains broken glass, some small root fibres, negro hair, the pincer of a scorpion, and a quantity of sandy, calcareous earth, together with water. One tin contains saw-dust of *lignum-vitæ* and sagewood, and the other tin fine powder from similar dusts, to which some scent has been added."

Superstition is, of course, still strong in all parts of the country, and especially among the more ignorant classes. It has not lost its grip even of Church members, for the ingrained dye of ages cannot be rubbed out in half a century.

But there are many negroes who are as free from the stain as the colonist from England. And from still larger numbers the terror of it is fast passing away. They are more sceptical in secret regarding its efficacy, and more open in their indifference to the power of its priests. The evil, in short, is a diminishing one, and it can never regain that absolute and terrible dominion which it formerly held over the entire race. The steady infiltration of religious doctrine into their minds has assisted to weaken their traditional beliefs by substituting for them new and loftier conceptions, and by providing purer outlets for the emotions. Among the less enlightened classes, however, a recrudescence of aboriginal habit, too strong to be resisted, sometimes sets in, with curious results. The most common development is a blind belief in the supernatural power of some man or woman of the race. These prophets and prophetesses have seen visions and dreamt dreams, and claim possession of the gift of healing. One person, who caused no small stir, may be taken as a type. He was a negro, who once a week, in the name of Christ, blessed the water of a river near Kingston, and declared that he imparted

to it the virtue of curing all human ills. He had thousands of credulous followers, chiefly of the class outside the influence of the Churches. They came from all parts of the country, many of them sick and maimed, and covered with sores, and wasted with suffering, all hoping for relief of body or mind. At the moment when the blessing took place the water was alleged to bubble up, but this circumstance no one had the opportunity of verifying, for the multitude of men and women and children hurriedly undressed and rushed naked into the river, laving their bodies, drinking the off-scourings, and filling all manner of vessels with the filthy liquid. These vessels found their way to every corner of the island, where their contents were consumed at leisure. The community was aghast at those proceedings, but neither the civil nor the religious authorities appeared able to do anything. After many months an opportunity occurred to arrest the prophet on a charge of sedition, and he was pronounced insane. Owing to a flaw in the law he returned to his hut by the river, and the movement gradually waned.

Bearing in mind how near the negro is

to the savage it is to his credit that he so seldom descends to the level to which he is more habituated. It may not be out of place to recall the fact that in England in 1837 Thom proclaimed himself a second Messiah, and founded a propaganda that had much vogue and finally ended in the shedding of blood ; and also the fact that in our own days there are pilgrimages to so-called holy spots which differ in nothing but external character from the rush to the Jamaican river. The minor superstitions also can be paralleled by beliefs common among the peoples of Europe. The misfortune of the blacks, however, is that their fancies are novel ; for strangeness, even to the cultured white, is not infrequently an evidence of paganism. But the psychological phenomena exhibited by the negro are becoming fewer. What, indeed, the lover of the *bizarre* and picturesque in human nature has most reason to fear in the future is that, under the influence of the practical Anglo-Saxon, the negro will altogether lose his racial idiosyncrasies and pass into the incarnation of the commonplace.

Evidence of the growth of the mental faculties is abundant. In 1861 the number of

persons above five years of age able to read, and to read and write, was 119,059. In 1871 the number was 152,472. In 1881 it had increased to 231,168. In 1891 it was 292,288, and the expansion continues. As the negroes are the illiterate portion of the population it is chiefly to them that the figures refer. Again, we find that in 1885 49·8 per cent. of bridegrooms and 64·8 per cent. of brides signed the marriage register by mark, whereas in 1896 the proportions were 42·2 and 53·4 respectively. Jamaica is therefore rapidly approaching the position with regard to the illiteracy of married persons which was occupied by England only about fifty years ago, and, as in England, the decrease is in favour of the brides. It is reasonable to suppose that these statistics do not convey an accurate idea of the progress made, because the art of writing often becomes atrophied from disuse after the negro leaves school, and many are ashamed to attempt a signature. The multiplication of district post-offices also bears witness to the spread of enlightenment. During the period from 1885 to 1895 as many as 47 were established throughout the interior, and the ordinary inland correspondence in-

creased from 1,167,755 letters in 1885 to 2,919,599 letters in 1895. There is as yet no popular literature in the country, but the taste for reading is spreading rapidly. At the reading-room of the Institute of Jamaica, during the four years ending 1896, the attendance augmented by 200 per cent. The circulation of the principal newspaper has recently been doubled, the new subscribers being largely those negroes who are rising up from the mass. The value of books imported in 1885 was, as we have seen, £8,374. By 1894 it had risen to £20,651, exclusive of the matter introduced through the post-office. The white community has been but slightly augmented, and the increase must, therefore, to a very large extent be attributed to the growing intellectual appetite of the blacks. We have thus the interesting fact that, while the total population has doubled since emancipation, the value of the literature brought into the island and distributed has multiplied a thousandfold.

All this points to the gradual mental enfranchisement of the negroes. The direct evidence, however, is even more striking. They are taking an ever larger share in the

public business of the colony. They form the bulk of the police force, admission to which implies a knowledge of reading and writing, and the possession of a good character and considerable intelligence. As a body they perform their duties to the satisfaction of the Governor and Inspector-General, and they are duties which are about the most difficult for a negro in his present stage to discharge. Among the industrial and agricultural classes there are men producing results which indicate considerable mental ability. On the railway we find negro drivers in charge of passenger trains in difficult country, much to the surprise of American engineers who visit the island. These have been trained in workshops of the company; and the manager, a gentleman with great experience of black labour, speaks in generous praise of their efficiency. In the higher walks the widened outlook has stimulated ambition, and given rise in many homes to planned effort on behalf of sons and daughters, who are being sent to the best educational establishments in the island. There they take a good place, and not infrequently beat their white fellow-students, who have had every advantage. Here are two cases in

point. An eleven year old negro lad from a country district recently gained a Government scholarship over competitors much his superior in social station, among them being two white youths, sons, both of them, of college principals. This boy is a fair mathematician. The other is that of a negro girl who gained a senior Cambridge scholarship at a ladies' college in competition with other girls of higher station and colour. Negro young men are passing the Civil Service examinations, and now fill minor offices in the various public departments. Several youths have proceeded to medical colleges abroad where they have graduated and have returned to the colony to practise as physicians. Others have received a legal training and have become solicitors and barristers. The ministers have been referred to. Many others have come to the front as journalists, teachers, and post-masters. We also find negresses employed as post-mistresses, telegraph operators, and general assistants in the Post Office Department, and the Postmaster-General states that they are fairly efficient in the discharge of their responsible work. In short, all the duties of the community which require the possession of mental ability for their proper

discharge are gradually being taken up by the negroes. It follows that it is among these classes that the highest intellectual faculties, reflective, logical, imaginative, and creative, are beginning to appear. Their literary compositions are losing the crudeness of thought and expression and the self-consciousness which characterise the ordinary attempts. A black lad has gained prizes in prose and verse competitions conducted by a newspaper and open to the island, while some of the most vigorous and dignified election-addresses of recent years have been written by negro candidates. They appear to be naturally gifted with an ear for the mysteries of melody, and proficiency is readily attained both in the instrumental and vocal branches of music. The Choral Union already referred to is a black organisation taught by an intelligent black. It has given many performances, and recently carried off the first prize in a public choral competition. No proper opportunity has yet been afforded the blacks of demonstrating to what extent they have the artistic sense, and the only evidence on the point is supplied by self-taught students. Crude though this be, it indicates a latent capacity

for drawing, colouring, and designing, and leads to the inference that with direction and encouragement they will yet attain success in art as well as in literature. These various facts have a bearing on the curious theory that as soon as the blacks reach adolescence their mental advancement ceases. The idea has been the result of observation in the past, when there was absolutely nothing for a young man or woman to aspire to or achieve after leaving school; the result being stagnation of mind, indulgence of passion, and inevitable demoralisation. With a broader outlook, with the advent of ambition and the opportunity of gratifying it, the reason and will have now begun to operate, and the gratification of the animal impulses is being sacrificed for success in the sphere of mind. There are frequent lapses, but with the correlative growth of the moral sense these will gradually diminish, and their nature will more and more come under the domination of those high principles which govern the latest issue of human evolution.

The growth of the moral sense generally has been brought out in an incidental way in the preceding pages, but the character of the

sexual relation may again be taken as the most convenient means of estimating the progress made. Little can be learnt from the official statistics. As we have seen these showed in the year 1885 an illegitimate birth-rate of 59·9 per cent. In 1895-96 the number of births was 26,842, of which 16,331, or 60·8 per cent., were illegitimate. The fact that there has been no decrease during the last twenty years is cited as a proof of the invincible unchastity of the race. There are one or two circumstances, however, which modify the force of this inference. Account must be taken of their racial position, and the conditions by which they are surrounded. In the mass they are still without a proper standard of morality; of the ethical laws which safeguard the sanctity of sex in highly civilized communities, they know practically nothing; and in their eyes there is nothing wrong in the instinctive gratification of sense. Chastity is considered unnatural. "Then why fe God mek me so?" said a woman who was remonstrated with. It is with their physical as it is with their higher life; they exist in the slums of the city among conditions that mean disease and death to more finely organised constitutions; and in like manner they are

oblivious of the principles that regulate moral health, not comprehending the attitude of those who possess and act on the knowledge. Even with many of the more intelligent, morality is not conceived to be an essential of religion. The sensuality of the race, in short, is not vice but ignorance.

Is it right to blame them? They have had but a short time in which to become acquainted with modern conceptions of conduct, while their contact with the whites has tended rather to confirm their own theory than to replace it by a better. This is especially the case with the young, who develop early and often become capable of parenthood before they understand what it means and the social consequences it involves. It is not surprising, therefore, to find still prevalent the old conviction that faithful living together constitutes marriage. Among the more respectable class the chief factor which operates in maintaining this system is still the cost supposed to be inseparable from the regular ceremony, as they see it performed in the case of the whites. Not having reached an economic prosperity which permits them to make such a display as is thought necessary, many feel there is no alternative but to come together without

the sanction of the Church or the Law. They, however, resolve to secure this, and conform to convention, whenever the household purse is heavy enough to bear the expense. Half a lifetime frequently passes away before the intention is realised, and it is no uncommon thing to witness a marriage where the bridesmaids are the grown-up daughters of the family. If a measure were put into force legalising the union of parties who had lived in this way for a number of years, the ratio of illegitimacy would be very considerably reduced, and a truer estimate obtained of the morality of the race. We are apt to confuse morality with legitimacy of relation. But the mere ceremony of marriage does not constitute morality. The official returns are based on the occurrence of this ceremony, and are no guide to the progress of the people in essential virtue of action. A large number of the younger members of the race also are in too impoverished a condition to marry, even if the cost were nominal. This is especially true of those in receipt of wages. They are able to live merely from hand to mouth, and they have no prospect of ever establishing a proper home. Loose connections are accordingly formed

within the limits of their means. It is interesting to observe, as bearing on this question of cost, that any unusual depression is accompanied by a downward tendency in the marriage-rate and an upward movement in the illegitimate birth-rate. During the past few years the standard of living generally has been very much reduced by numerous untoward circumstances. As a result the number of marriages in 1896-97 was only 4·3 per thousand as compared with 5·5 in 1893-94, while the illegitimate birth-rate was 61·1 per hundred as compared with 60·6 in 1893-94. There are other objections to marriage which, though scarcely ever stated in cold excuse, aid powerfully in inducing the state of things that exists. As will be seen, the women of the peasant class are still practically independent of the men, and are frequently their superiors both in physical and mental capacity. Bearing in mind their elementary notions of sex, one can well understand why many will not bind themselves down for life to men who may turn out to be lazy and good-for-nothing, and a burden instead of a help and protection. They prefer a relationship which can, if necessary, give them their freedom at any time. On the

other hand, a negro of the tradesman or artisan class, otherwise willing to marry and settle down, is often reluctant to tie himself to a negress of the same class, because of her lack of training and domestic qualities. This want of domesticity, the inability as yet to create a proper home-feeling and environment, is very common, and is one of the chief reasons why so many unions are failures; but it is being gradually lessened as the general development of the race proceeds. The fact that these men entertain a doubt of the kind is perhaps to their credit, and it indicates that they would do right if the necessary conditions were present. There are other and more obscure impulses and circumstances of primitive life which act in the same direction, and the general result is a large proportion of unions which may or may not be lasting, according to the superficial relations that are maintained. So long as they remain temporary, they may, so to speak, be permanent. If made legal, the risk is that they will become intolerable, and cease by one of the parties leaving the other. On the other hand, when they are casual, the necessity for mutual kindness and forbearance establishes a condition that is the best guarantee

of permanency. The result of severance is not so hard on the woman as might be supposed. She continues working as before without the incumbrance of a husband, or adopts another in his place, and the children grow up or die as they would have grown up or died in any other circumstances. The system is barbarous, but a natural phase of racial development. It is, however, passing away under a gradually evolving sense of the civilized view of things. Conscience is beginning to act; higher effort is everywhere visible; "living together" is practised less openly. It is noticed that those irregularly related are more sensitive as to their position, and readier to listen to argument on the subject. An appreciation of right relations is spreading, and although the number of marriages is not rising in proportion to the population, there is a better knowledge of all that the ceremony involves. It means, in addition to the legal advantages, elevation in the social scale, respectability, and the possession of all the privileges connected with the Church. These are the simple objects of negro ambition, and along with economic prosperity they will act more and more as a magnet to draw them into a proper

conjugal condition. Above all, the passion itself is growing to be of a higher order. As respect and affection grew out of the old sensuality, so with many these have developed into the purest love and companionship. Now there is wooing and winning in the highest sense. So far, then, as the blacks are concerned, the conditions that bring about illegitimacy are gradually improving, and they will inevitably contribute less and less to the annual rate.

But the negroes are by no means solely responsible for the large percentage; the rate is not a barometer showing the state of their morals. This is a belief widely held, even within the colony. It must be borne in mind that there is a foreign community of over ten thousand persons, and a mixed community of one hundred and twenty-one thousand, and the colour of the juvenile population indicates that a large proportion of the illegitimate increment in the chief centres is due to classes higher than the blacks. It is among these that vice, in its proper sense, prevails to the greatest extent. There is no concentration of impurity in the social organism, as in other countries, because it exists everywhere and is everywhere con-

done. Public sentiment is gradually changing for the better on the subject, and though not a few prominent men still live lives of open shame, their number is diminishing, and the practice of evil is being more and more hidden under the veil of secrecy. Many of the newer colonists also are bringing into the life of the country a purer and more wholesome example. The result of the vicious intercourse that so widely prevails is to swell the ratio of illegitimacy, and much of the responsibility rests on the white race. It may be said that where the pure black is concerned, there are two to blame. But the negroes err in ignorance of higher laws, while the others sin with knowledge. The average white does not look at the black girl as he does at one of his own race; if he regards her favourably at all, it is usually with the eye of lust. And she, in her racial humility and darkness, yields to him an abject submission. Many are often what we call immoral from ulterior motives. Some of these it is probable that the English public will never fully understand. In a community dominated by racial caste, the one burning desire is to possess a fair skin. Each remove from the sable hue means a step higher in the social scale. Many parents

who resent the bitterness of their own lot make every effort to unite their children to mates of a lighter shade. Black girls, no matter how handsome and well-educated, are left by suitors of their own class for mulattoes and quadroons, who again seek for higher alliances; and all will enter at first into the primitive relation to accomplish their end. The fairer-skinned women, however, are more passionate than the pure black and less faithful and stable, and the result in the end is to increase the social corruption. Large numbers of these women also live in illegitimate relation with whites of every class. On the other hand, negro women, with all their superficial irresponsibility, possess no inherent bent towards the conditions of vicious living. Many have an intense craving, an honest craving, if one may use the term, for fair offspring, and when they yield to the solicitations of the white man, it is in the hope of obtaining what, in ordinary circumstances, is beyond their power of attainment. With the blacks, too, account must be taken of numerous special conditions which ought to weigh little with the superior nature, but which act automatically and irresistibly on the lower mind and body—the sensuous influence of the climate,

the loneliness of their environment, the monotony of their lives, the temptations of industrial methods such as the all-night peeling of ginger, the frequent opportunity of meeting remote from the eyes of onlookers, the promiscuous mode of living and sleeping in single rooms and huts, the absence of reserve in conversation and dress, and very many others. There is, indeed, more to be said in extenuation of the lapses of the negroes in this respect than the Mother Country is able to appreciate. The main fact which emerges from their social history is that fundamentally they are not more sensual than the white, and that given a fair chance they can live as stainless lives as the best specimens of the latter can do in the tropics. They do it now. There is no doubt that the impression created by a certain order of crime in the United States, having its root in race reprisal, has reflected injuriously on their reputation. But no negro takes advantage of a white woman in Jamaica; the respect of the most passionate and wild for the white sex is too deep and strong. On the whole the situation is not so dark as statistics would imply, and the positive evidence of development corroborates this view. The

general moral tone of the race is improving ; aspiration is purer, the homes are purer, the women are more womanly ; there is more reticence of speech and habit in public and private ; and among the educated class the modesty of the girls and the manliness of the young men afford a pleasing forecast of the more general self-conquest to be achieved in the future. It is interesting to note that recently in a large mixed girls' college a negro girl was awarded by common consent the prize for general good conduct during the session. As late as May, 1898, a negro girl wrote a remarkable letter to the newspapers protesting against the action of a coloured member of the Legislature in introducing a bill to make it easy for vicious men to ruin the children of her race. It was remarkable because of its womanliness, its logical and dignified diction, its indication of the moral height to which this world-despised, dark-skinned people have already attained.

This higher conception of the sex relation is being accompanied by an improvement in the position of woman. In other words, the difference between her and man is widening. This is observable throughout the whole range of

negro life, though naturally least of all among the peasantry and associated classes. There we find the women to a large extent still equals of the men and voluntarily sharing with them the responsibility of earning a livelihood. In 1891 there were no fewer than 123,353 females engaged in agricultural operations. They are also the market carriers, conveying the produce of the cultivators to the towns, and bringing back the simple necessities for the home. One of the most interesting spectacles to be seen in Jamaica is the procession of black women and girls, loads on head, swinging, with upright graceful carriage, along the green lanes and highways of the interior. They wear no corsets, and buckle up their skirts to give their limbs perfect freedom. A robust, active, and independent class, they appear unconscious of any hardship in the arrangement which transfers to them so large a part of the burden of life. It gives them a certain power, apart from sex, over the men, which in the circumstances is perhaps essential. It would seem that nature has counterbalanced the weakness of sex by supplying them with a constitution stronger even than the male. The one drawback is a tendency to neglect giving proper attention to

the duties of maternity and the responsibilities of the household. Nevertheless there is a visible disposition among the men to treat them with greater courtesy and tenderness. It was formerly a common experience to come across negroes riding to church and market with their womankind walking behind ; but the custom is dying out, and intelligent members of the race are proud to give their wives the best mount they can furnish. Among the middle classes, and especially among those in the towns, the women are assuming the place allotted to them in the modern social system. The wives are housekeepers and companions, and the daughters, as we have seen, are given the best education possible. Already, many girls are employed in higher vocations in the community. The more affluent remain at home and devote themselves to voluntary service of various kinds. Others continue to cultivate their intelligence. It is not uncommon to see black girls taking lessons in music, languages, and other branches of knowledge, from white instructors, preparatory to marriage with respectable negroes. The ideals of European civilization are not more pure and honest.

Side by side with these mental and moral

movements a significant change is proceeding in the physical character of the negro. The interval since slavery has been too brief to allow of the complete obliteration of the original characteristics of tribe, and one occasionally comes across a pure-blooded member of some branch of the race, or finds, among the old hill-stock, negroes ready to respond to words still in ordinary use on the west coast of Africa. But the fusion is very general, and it has already created a homogeneous people with common traits and aspirations. They speak the same language. In the mass it may be likened to infantile English with superficial differences—the foundation of dialect—due to mutual distance and isolation. Apart from inversion, there is clipping of words and slurring of harsh letters. This can be put down to temperature. Effort of mouth, like effort of every other kind, falls under the general law, and the easier bye-paths, the short cuts, are taken to expression. Right through the laconic, slipshod speech of the majority can be traced the effect of this climatic weathering and unconscious adaptation of a difficult vocabulary to their simple needs. But among the intelligent class, English is being spoken with increasing

precision and affluence. The educative influences of civilization, the struggle upward to a better state of living, the self-discipline and increasing self-respect, are all combining to work a further improvement. The inward character is gradually re-moulding the facial outline. The difference which moral effort makes on the features is well exemplified in the case of the women of the race. It has been said that an old negress is always hideous, but she is usually so from sexual excess. Those who are chaste and devoted to the higher interests of life continue comely to the end. And thus it is that the receding profile, the thick protruding lips, and the flat nostrils are disappearing, and the features are more and more approximating to the clear-cut, aquiline Caucasian type. A finer adaptation still is taking place. It is the Scotch and English face and manner that are being evolved, just as in Hayti it is unmistakably the French. A keen observer might almost be able to tell whether the people are being trained by Presbyterians or Methodists, so apt are they, as an infant people, to take on the colour and character of their surroundings. The skin, too, is of a finer and softer texture, and one frequently observes

young members of the race who, if white, would be considered singularly handsome. Even in the faces which retain the aboriginal cast there is an expression of intelligence which redeems their form. There are negroes in Jamaica, of course, who are at the bottom level of physical degeneration, but if photographs of a group of Africans and a group of average Jamaicans be compared, the difference will at once be apparent. It is the former that the illustrator usually goes to for his model, and the manner in which the race is presented to the English public in serious prints is an offence against both art and truth. No foreign artist proceeds to the slums of London to obtain a typical specimen of the Anglo-Saxon, and to take the lowest member of the negro family as representative of the whole, and especially of the highest, caricaturing him in addition, is merely an exhibition of that insular ignorance which is characteristic of the English imagination. The negro is sensitive to ridicule, and these portraitures give great offence. They do more harm, indeed, to the cause of human brotherhood than those who are responsible for them, and those who laugh at them, can possibly realise. The dominant type of

negro feature, it may finally be noted, is original, and does not suggest a comparison with others. In this it is unlike the coloured visage, at which one often glances, half startled, to catch a far-off resemblance to some familiar style of face in the Mother Country.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEGRO OF TO-DAY.

WE are now in a position to sum up the results of the past sixty years of freedom, and to draw the lessons that these unmistakably teach. They are seldom appreciated at their true value. Travellers seize only the broad effects, knowing nothing of the world of fact behind; but no impressionist picture can convey a correct idea of the negro and his life. Apart from the inner character, there is a superficial difference due to environment and economic circumstance. One, for instance, may come in contact with the town class and believe the worst that has been said of the race; another may see most of the country settler and arrive at the conclusion that the best has never been told. To understand them, long residence in their midst is necessary, and even then it is not easy to get behind the mobile faces and discover what is going on there. The educated

are more frank, and will converse honestly with those whom they trust. Co-ordinating the information secured in this way with the results of extended observation, a tolerably clear portrait of the negro, as he is to-day, can be presented. Three types of character and attainment are distinguishable—the masses, first of all; second, a considerable proportion who have risen above the common level; and third, the few who have arrived at the highest stage of development.

With regard to the first, one is continually impressed with the likeness of these to infantile individual life as we are accustomed to see it in the white race. Trait for trait, the correspondence is complete. The negro of this class is, in actual fact, the child of the human evolution. His existence is simple, and governed by elementary laws, because he has not yet acquired the knowledge which creates desire and produces a complex nature. Out of this simplicity of foundation ramify the superficial shoots of character which he has so far put forth. His mental power is small; the reasoning, reflective, and æsthetic capacities are only struggling into activity, and he lacks self-control, is imitative rather than creative, argumentative, but

not logical. The moral faculties are dormant, and though conscience exists, it is in its rawest state—a piece of ore, crude and, for the present, useless, but with great potentialities. He cannot comprehend the ethical creed of the white ; he is himself guided by the movings of brute instinct and sense. He is not vicious ; he knows no law, and, therefore, knows no transgression. Without settled principles, he is a moral opportunist. Thus he is untruthful, because he shrinks from punishment, and a lie is a fence of speech which saves him. This feature was accentuated by the slave *régime*, as duplicity was deepened in the Greek race by their subjection to the Turk. His spiritual nature is also in its infancy. At present it is largely emotional. He is religious, inasmuch as he is attached to the church, and reflects the more palpable teaching he receives there. But he is not pious. The shallowness of his faith is seen in the fact that he is on familiar terms with the Good of the Unseen ; God and Christ are current phrases in his speech. He has a greater belief in the Evil of the Unseen, of which, consequently, he stands darkly in awe, both in thought and speech. Because this is so, he is superstitious, and his ideas partake of

the grotesque and terrible. The Christian religion is gradually giving him new images of a mild and pacific kind, but the ordinary conception of sin, and the more difficult doctrines associated with it, are beyond his apprehension. His general character is based upon these fundamental attributes. He is patient and placid, which is due partly to his sensuous environment, and partly to the small content and range of his mind. For the same reason he is, as a rule, sunny in temperament. Knowledge receives impressions, and absorbs and spiritualises them, and is sensitive to adverse influences. Ignorance, with impenetrable front, merely mirrors the impression. We do not find fine inward feeling in the average negro. This, however, is not incompatible with suffering. It is a mistake to suppose that he is devoid of sensibility. He faces the world with a smile, but it often covers the agony of want or pain. Over him, too, hangs the shadow of strange disease, the result of the immoral conditions into which he was introduced, the penalty of broken laws he does not understand. He is timid and dependent, owing to his conscious weakness, yet none so brave when he forgets his position and is simply the man.

One Jamaica negro—a soldier in the West India Regiment—has won the Victoria Cross for valour in the field. He protected an officer from a well-aimed bullet by throwing himself in front, and receiving it in his own body. This is not an isolated instance of the negro's self-sacrifice, for Jamaica slaves have more than once died for their masters. He is responsive to sympathy and justice, and ready, where these are given, to form passionate attachments to the superior race. On the other hand, he is quick to detect unkindness, and, when hardly treated, he passes from moods of sullenness into paroxysms of rage. He is an excellent worker when the stimulus is sufficient, but he will not readily bind himself to labour, just as he will not readily tie himself in marriage, because he dislikes and mistrusts all arrangements that savour of slavery. But where there is trust he often falls naturally into prolonged service. In such a case he is absolutely faithful to duties and responsibilities, though inclined to take advantage of leniency. He has an unsophisticated humour, native to himself, and as wise as the wisdom of children. Yet he does not understand the wit of the white. He resents it, in the belief that it is ridicule, which he



SERGT. W. J. GORDON, WEST INDIA REGIMENT
(Holder of the Victoria Cross).

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cannot abide. He is polite, even punctilious in his manner. His pleasures are few because all his tastes are undeveloped. He is temperate in diet, his means and opportunities being limited and his knowledge of foods and their preparation small. He is largely insensible to noise, as well as unconscious of odours. He prefers an uneventful routine from day to day, and excitement is relished only at long intervals. The keynote of his entire life, in short, is simplicity. Such are the negroes in the mass.

The higher class, a large and growing one, is formed of those who have passed on to the stage corresponding to adolescence in the civilized white. We obtain glimpses in them of the primitive nature, but with many new elements that give promise of a virile manhood. They possess intellectual force, character, and a clearing moral vision. At the same time they show the defects of the period—self-consciousness, arrogance, pride. In their anxiety to reach the level of the white they cease to be natural, and copy and exaggerate his worst, rather than his best, points in manner and speech. When writing they string ponderous words together without being aware

of their value. But these are like the school-boy productions of the white, and are outgrown.

From this intermediate class it is but a step to the highest, in which we find the adult members of the race. They are few in number, but every minister can point to one or more in his congregation—serious, reticent, industrious, pure-living men and women, imbued with true humility and a sense of the real meaning and issue of life; who toil and feel the sweets of it, going forth to their labour in the morning, and returning in the evening to their cottages and wives and children and all the interests of an established home, and who know the peace and rest of the Sabbath, like the workers in highly civilized countries. These highest types in no way correspond to the popular idea of the negro. They are already far up the ascent of evolution, and within sight of the white. With the enlargement of their intellectual and spiritual faculties, with finer bodies and finer minds, their capacity for sorrow and suffering has developed. The struggle for existence is not yet so keen among them as it is in the societies of temperate regions, but anxiety and care are becoming their familiar companions. And

beneath the surface of their nature lie great depths of sadness, which the average white can never fathom, the presence of which he never even suspects. The thought of the dark past and the uncertain future weighs heavily upon them. Like the Jews, they have had unforgettable experiences. They have come through the wilderness, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death, through a land that no white man has passed through, and where no white man has dwelt, and the misery and loneliness of it all is still with them. The more they evolve and the more they know, the more the heritage of the race becomes a mystery, strange alike in its origin and in its intolerable pressure upon every movement of their lives.

This, then, is the race as it exists to-day, a product of sixty years of freedom ; on the whole, a plain, honest, Anglicised people, with no peculiarity except a harmless ignorance and superstition. Looking at it in contrast with what it was at the beginning of the period, one cannot but be impressed with the wonderful progress it has made. And where there has been steady progress in the past, there is infinite hope for the future. Yet there are many

who acknowledge no progress and entertain no hope. Even those best acquainted with the length and breadth of the situation are constantly thrown into moods of doubt and despondency. So many things go wrong, the character is so superficial, industrial methods are so unintelligent and slovenly, and the relapse into primal habit is so common, that sometimes there seems nothing left to do but despair. It is a strange fact that there are ministers of religion working in the interests of the negro who yet do not believe in the possibility of his ultimate attainment. The mistake all these make is to view the race out of perspective. It is almost invariably judged by an English standard of conduct, but a true idea of what it is capable of becoming can only be obtained by regarding it from the standpoint of natural law, according to which a thousand years are but as one day. It is only sixty years behind civilization in time, but an age in attainment, and it cannot be dragged summarily to the front. At the best, the elevation of a people is a slow process; it cannot be civilized while we wait. The impact of Roman power and culture on the northern barbarians of the United Kingdom did not

make itself felt for three hundred years; it was, indeed, only during the last century that the old conditions in the highlands of Scotland collapsed under the forces of law and order. Too much is expected from the negro. Sixty years, the life-time of a man, what racial results can be obtained in so brief a span? Sufficient allowance is never made for the adverse influences that have beset him by the way. The measure of a man's worth is not his success, but what he has overcome to reach it. The barbaric heritage, the environment, the individual and racial isolation of the negro must all be kept in mind. He has had practically no training or education. He has been kept in ignorance of the methods of production and the laws which govern the economic prosperity of a community. His social progress has been conditioned by a superior force, and we have seen what in the main has been the character of that force—its low ideals, its contempt of race, its lack of altruistic endeavour. The sole agency which has been continuously and directly at work in his interest has been the missionary Church. In the circumstances the marvel is that he has accomplished so much and advanced so far. Specific instances of

high attainment are necessarily few, because there must be greater widening and deepening of elementary capacity before there can be specialisation of effort. We do not expect to see the ripened product as the soil is being prepared and the seed sown. First the blade, and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear. We should be satisfied if in the wide field we can detect a few green shoots. These we do find, and they give ample indication of what is to come. The quality, it is true, is in many cases not high. It cannot be high. But the fact loses nothing of its significance and promise. The moral wisdom, the fine organisation of mind, the serene strength of culture, will arrive in richer measure as self-consciousness is left behind, and as time goes on.

Meanwhile the position of the race in the country is well-defined and its destiny inevitable. It is usually supposed that the whites are diminishing in numbers, but this is not the case; during the last thirty years they have increased by over one thousand, and the tendency is still upward. Many of the newer settlers have entered on the cultivation of oranges and other fruit, and of kola and coffee. It is probable that there will always be a leaven


of whites among the population. The time, at any rate, when there shall be none is too remote to be considered at present. The coloured classes are multiplying at a slightly more rapid rate than the blacks, but the process will be modified in the future by the operation of moral forces now in comparative abeyance. What the end of this people is to be is matter for speculation. They are not so robust as the blacks, and less fitted by temperament and constitution to toil in the field. There is, however, little evidence available on this subject, and the lack of it indicates a suitable field for exact observation. The Government might make an important contribution to anthropology by differentiating the colour degrees in its compilations of statistics. The main fact is that the blacks, both numerically and industrially, are the predominating race, and will continue to be so. In the matter of number, the census returns of 1891 give the colour proportions as follows: whites 14,692; coloured, 121,955; black, 488,624. The social organisation is therefore like a pyramid. The whites constitute the apex, the coloured class compose the middle courses, and the masses or the negroes make up the broad base. The total population

of the colony in 1897 was estimated to be slightly over 700,000.

In the matter of industry the sugar-planter still considers that his interest is the representative interest of the colony, and the people of Britain assume that it is. As a matter of fact, the sugar-cane—itsself an exotic—occupies but a comparatively small place among the resources of the island. In 1896 the combined value of sugar, and rum and molasses, was only 18 per cent. of the total exports. The area under cultivation in cane is equal only to 1·14 per cent. of the cultivable area, or 16·4 per cent. of all the lands under crops, or 34 per cent. of those producing exportable crops, and includes the cultivations of the small settlers, who own and work over six thousand small sugar mills. The number of persons employed in the industry is only 6·1 per cent. of the population. The process of abandonment is still going on. It might be arrested, but the remedy lies not so much in a change in conditions abroad, as in a change in the outlook and methods of the planters. In Jamaica, as in Louisiana, the salvation of the industry must come from within. It is demonstrable that remunerative cane-growing is possible, even in the face of the

adverse influences now existing, when carried on in accordance with the latest developments in business principle and scientific economy. No matter what alterations may be made in the fiscal systems of foreign countries, it must decline under present circumstances, until it reaches its proper level in relation to the industrial activity of the world. Absence of capital, debt, and other difficulties cannot justify, though the climatic influences may extenuate, the lack of self-help and enterprise which has been the bane of the planters from the first. It should not be understood that the industry in itself is to be condemned. On the contrary it has many features to recommend it as one suitable to the tropics. It is less liable than others to be affected by storms and droughts, and it gives employment to numbers of negroes unfitted as yet for higher service. That these are the most degraded of their kind, and that their work maintains them in their degradation, is not the fault of the industry but of the conditions under which they labour. The planters are responsible for these; they have never professed to look after the morals of their employees. The ideal outlook is one in which the cultivation would be carried

on by means of the central factory system. The negroes know how to grow the cane, and they would become independent farmers, selling to the factory at a fixed rate. Such a system would avoid the labour problem and preserve the industry on a rational basis. It is not, however, necessary that the industry should continue to exist, so far as the prosperity of the island is concerned. The hope for the future lies in the general utilisation of all its resources. Sugar might well play an important part, but it can never again play the chief part. Few countries have been more favoured than Jamaica. There are six different climates packed between sea level and the highest mountain peak, which reaches an altitude of 7,360 feet; and the fruits and vegetables of the temperate zone, as well as the most delicate tropical products, can be grown without difficulty. The island indeed is well fitted to become the orchard and hot-house of the United Kingdom. The country cannot fail the people if the people do not fail the country. Hitherto the work of exploitation has been left to chance whites from the regions of science and enterprise, and small progress has been made in comparison with



the possibilities. On one side we see the old staple industry dying out ; on the other we see the accidental growth of a few others which have been sufficient to prevent an economic crisis. But droughts, low prices, and other factors are constantly interfering with a steady flow of prosperity, and these are aggravated by ignorance, inefficient methods, lack of combined purpose, and conservatism. The white Creoles will not move ; the blacks do not know how to move. The colony has again come to a dead wall of circumstance. A decision has to be made, a new position taken up. Everything points to what that must be. All the events of the past sixty years have been leading up to it. It is simply that the blacks must be recognised as having entered into full possession of the country. It is inevitably theirs ; its history will henceforward be their history, its fortune their fortune. It is time that this fact should be frankly acknowledged and accepted by the responsible element, and the outlook reconsidered on the fresh basis thus furnished.

We are aware of the character and capacity of the negro, and have some idea of his latent possibilities. The question then is what should be done, what should be the new attitude

adopted, by those set in authority and influence over him. It is sometimes said that he has gained by his transfer to Jamacia, that he has never regarded himself as an exile, and that he is now in a position superior to that which he occupied in Africa. Britain, it is therefore alleged, has no responsibility towards him, save what is involved in the ordinary obligation of a State to protect a weak and dependent people within its distant territorial sphere. This, in fact, has been her policy since Emancipation. Her relation to her black subjects has been a passive one, and they have, without special Imperial assistance, developed up to a certain point. But they are still a child race, ignorant and impressionable, and yet capable of unknown growth ; and according to the treatment and training they now receive will be the character of their manhood. Britain is their guardian, and the time is opportune for her to ask whether the position does not involve more on her part than she has hitherto been willing to recognise. Are they to be permitted to evolve along indefinite and haphazard lines according to the idiosyncrasies of successive Governors, or along lines in harmony with whatever genius they possess ? If the present

system of opportunism be continued, and the problems of the future be dealt with simply as they arise, crises are bound to recur, and there will be great waste of energy and money and retarded fruition of the race. All the circumstances point to the adoption of the alternative plan, which is to take the race in hand, as it is now learning to stand and walk, and to educate and train it according to a definite plan and under the direction of proper administrators. The right of the negroes to individual development, so long as the rights of others are not encroached upon, should be the root principle of any such policy. It was the admirable aim of Sir Henry Blake to call into activity the self-help and co-operation of the people. Even that, however, was not going deep enough. A man cannot build a house without having the materials with which to build it, as well as the knowledge how to put these together. There must first exist the simplest rudimentary qualities — intelligence, mutual trust, ambition ; and these in the tropics can only be stimulated by the steady pressure of a higher force emanating from the temperate region and acting through those in local power and authority. Many difficulties will, no doubt,

be met with in initiating and carrying out such a policy, but they are chiefly the result of the inaction of the past. The work should have been begun at Emancipation. The opportunity was pretermitted, and after enjoying almost complete licence for sixty years, the people cannot now be coerced to the same extent. They do not object, however, to a certain discipline and restraint, if treated with kindness. Most of them are conscious of their weakness and inferiority, and secretly welcome an escape from themselves and the influence of their environment. But the treatment must be just and sympathetic. In individual cases at present, where this policy is pursued, the negroes exhibit a gratitude and fidelity, and an anxiety to learn, which prove that this is the real avenue leading to the effective development and maturation of the race.

The Government, strangely enough, is afraid to interfere with their liberty. The feeling is a legacy from 1865, and is due to an erroneous conception of the origin of the tragedy. It was the result, as we know, not of over-paternalism, but of too little ; of the absence of that attention and discipline which the negro would have accepted then as he would now.

A continuation of the existing condition of things is more likely to lead to a repetition of the episode, than the imposition of judicious constraint. What the negro really fears is an attempt to take advantage of him as if he were an inferior being. This idea is based on the experience of the past, and he has not yet learned to trust white men without reservation. When he is convinced of their good faith he is ready to acquiesce in any arrangement. A simple illustration may be given. A large proprietor informed his tenants that he would not permit them any longer to run fire through the lands, and that they must cut down the bush and collect it into heaps and then burn it in safety. Those who disobeyed would be given notice to quit and be sued for damages. Such a provision touched the negro nature to the quick. It was anticipated by many that they would refuse to relinquish their traditional methods. The matter was explained to them. In a few years the number of tenants on the property had actually doubled, and all were perfectly content. The principle here exemplified is capable of application to all the circumstances of the negro community. In its anxiety to avoid giving offence, the Government does

not seem able to move a foot in any direction. What is wanted is nothing extraordinary, but merely a new outlook and the introduction of an energising initiative and direction. There should be adequate social legislation, and the adequate enforcement of it. If new and experimental measures, which are opposed to the views of doctrinaires, be necessary, let them be carried out. The same fundamental principles underlie all action, but they are bound to find varied expression, to meet the special needs of a people. Political and social formularies adapted to the case of the home countries do not suit races on a lower level of existence and surrounded by different physical conditions. Protection in Britain, for instance, usually means the benefit of a class at the expense of the many. In Jamaica it would mean the education of the people in the means by which they would eventually be enabled to subsist without its help. In these days we are too apt to bow down before dogmas that pass current for eternal truth. After all, legislation is nothing but a struggling after right and equity and mercy and love. And law is but the attempt to systematise it and carry it out in practice. The evil in man's nature is constantly thwarting

the purpose, but all through governmental aim and action we can perceive a straining after higher ideals and more perfect adjustment of human activities and relations. Shall we then limit such effort or seek to adopt the methods that appear to make for the best and easiest development? The answer seems self-evident. The negroes of Jamaica should be governed with special reference to their racial status and social requirements. The law of England should not mechanically regulate their development. The law of England is not a universal cure-all.

CHAPTER IX.

CONDITIONS OF DEVELOPMENT.

WE have seen that contact with the influences and forces of the temperate region is one of the conditions underlying human civilization and progress in the tropics. The Imperial Government must, therefore, continue to retain control of the main lines of national life in Jamaica. The time is not conceivable when the diverse elements in the community will overcome the effect of climate, lay aside their mutual prejudices and jealousies, and combine in efficient parliamentary action for the common good. It was, perhaps, a mistake to grant the low franchise which now exists, because a people which has not attained to a reasonable degree of personal freedom ought not to be entrusted with full political responsibility. In view, indeed, of the natural laws that dominate the existence of tropical peoples, it may be accepted as an axiom that absolute rule from

abroad is the best rule, if the governing power can be trusted to exercise its authority aright. But even Britain, with a national conscience that is highly sensitive, is still liable to make mistakes and commit injustice. It would be the greatest mistake of all, however, to give responsible government to the primitive communities within the equatorial area of the Empire. In Jamaica the instinct of the black population is the truest guide in the matter. They believe that self-government would mean a return to the circumstances prior to 1865, and that the rule of the Crown, or a modified form of it, is the safest for their race. It is significant that it is now generally recognised in the colony that the limit of political freedom has for the present been reached. This does not imply that the capacity for public effort has been restricted. On the contrary, within that limit lies a sphere of opportunity which the inhabitants have scarcely yet begun to occupy. They have to exploit the privileges they now possess, and show themselves fit for the higher responsibilities of the future. The negroes especially have taken small advantage of the system ; but there is abundant promise, and on the whole the experiment is one worth con-

tinuing. It is a system well adapted to train them in the exercise of political power without placing too great a strain on their capacity, and it should be maintained, unless the white and coloured elected elements of the Legislature make it impossible. There is some fear that this may be the case, and that the people may appeal for a reversion to government by the Crown. The common mistake is to suppose that public content and well-being are the result of constitutional changes. The advancement of the country, however, depends not on the extension of political privileges, but on its material development, and on the character of its men and women. The problem that awaits solution is not political, but industrial and social. It is largely a matter of administration. And this administration can only be had by securing the services of statesmen from the home countries who will be backed by the moral and practical support of Britain. The Governor and responsible civil staff should be specially qualified to assist in the work of elevating a people of low racial efficiency. No task could be of greater interest to human intelligence and sympathy; no field of activity might be more productive. In the region of pure legislation alone there is

unlimited scope. The aim should be not to make the negro more dependent, or to pauperise him, but to help him in such a manner as to ensure his continuous progress. The administration should be simple and inexpensive.

The problem is to reconcile the pressing claims of progress with the low economic status of the people. They cannot be expected to contribute much in the way of taxes to the public revenue, yet in no country is an increasing public revenue more required. It is frequently stated that Jamaica is over-administered, and its resources are contrasted with those of other countries, but it must be borne in mind that the population is not entirely self-supporting. It is unable to supply itself properly with education, medical attendance, and other advantages, on account of its racial position, and the poverty of its individual members, and these must be provided by an authority which can make the best use of the money each contributes for the purpose. So long as the majority of the people remain at their present level, the system appears to be one fitted to give the best results. The obligation to meet taxation is an incentive to work. It provides, therefore, excellent discipline of mind and body

for many who earn and pay for civilized conveniences, which they would not seek to obtain if the matter were left to their own volition. The people of other countries are not only able but willing to provide for what they require without the intervention of the State. This paternal *régime* naturally necessitates a larger Civil Service, and it is this fact which leads the uninitiated to the conclusion that the colony is over-governed. Economy might be effected in salaries, but it would be unwise to diminish these to a point which would lower the character of the British official. These have expenses unknown to the majority of Creoles, and though it is a mistake to regard the climate as unhealthy, some compensation is essential for the absence in their lives of all those associations and activities which are the flower of existence to a cultured people.

Of first importance is the inculcation and application of the principles of wholesome living. At present the initiative in this direction rests mainly with the local Boards, and progress is immeasurably slow. Instead of adopting a negative policy of observation, the Government should incite these bodies to action. The capital town is the most vital and sensitive spot

in the island, and it might be well for the Government to take over the control of the public health there as an object lesson, and show what can be accomplished by intelligence and energy. New measures should also be introduced to meet the social evils that have not yet been touched. Machinery for carrying these out must be provided, for without this they will be as useless as others have been in the past. The medical service should be made more available. The system of subsidising practitioners is an expensive one, and can therefore be maintained only on a limited scale, while, as already stated, the charges are too high for the majority of the negroes. Any change to a simpler *régime* would probably meet with opposition from the medical body, but the matter is not one of conserving a livelihood for a class, but of relieving the sufferings and saving the lives of an ignorant people. A supply of qualified nurses and dispensers, with cottage hospitals to be visited at intervals by the Government doctors, appears to be the most economical line upon which improvement might come. The ultimate remedy for this and other evils, where the cost is the chief element of consideration, is the material progress of the

people. It will, therefore, pay the Government to remove all the difficulties which hinder that progress. A more rapid abandonment of the primitive one-roomed cabin should be induced. It is a direct and constant promoter of impurity and disease, and if the house-tax and its incidence has a tendency to maintain the existing conditions, some better method of raising the revenue should be devised. No rate for the relief of the poor of a community should be obtained at the expense of the social advancement of the class immediately above. The employment of women in the fields is also a question for consideration. If they go out to work, there should be infant schools or *crèches* where the children could be properly cared for. The practice of leaving them at home is nothing but desertion, and it is scarcely a wonder that so many die.

Related to the character of the home-life is the subject of illegitimacy. Illegitimacy is the open sore of Jamaica, and no healthy progress can be made until it is healed. Hitherto the subject has been mainly approached and discussed from the subjective and sentimental point of view, and the nature of the issue is widely and, it must be said, often purposely

misconceived. The present loose relations of the sexes suit the easy morality of the male population. It is not necessary for the women to register the fathers of their illegitimate children, and they seldom do so. To obtain alimony they can resort to the law courts, but the process is a troublesome and disagreeable one ; and the great majority prefer to acquiesce in their treatment and fate. Jamaica is consequently a paradise for immoral men, and it is not surprising that any proposal to introduce a more righteous state of things should be quietly but strenuously opposed. It would be inconvenient for the educated and influential classes to become the acknowledged fathers of their illegitimate children, and these classes accordingly declare that the real object of the reform desired is to restrain immorality by law, which, they assert, is impossible ; alleging, also, that any such attempt would produce a rank outgrowth of blackmail. By adopting this attitude they succeed year after year in throwing out legislative measures designed to secure the registration of the father as well as of the mother.

The question primarily, however, is not one of immorality at all. It is a matter of equitable

relation between man and woman, between subject and subject of the State. The object is to secure for the children and the mothers their legal rights ; the mothers and children, particularly, of the humbler classes, who are unable, in their abject ignorance, to raise their own social and legal status. At present the women of these classes are the playthings of the superior section of the community, which often cares less for the resulting offspring than it does for its dogs and its horses. These offspring, however, have a right to be fed and clothed and educated by those responsible for their existence, and it is this right which is sought to be established. No law is required to secure it in countries where the responsibilities of parentage are accepted and acted on ; but in Jamaica, with its primitive people preyed upon by the higher racial factor, a law is indispensable. If it were made essential for the names of the fathers to be registered along with the mothers, an important step would be taken towards giving the thousands of outcast children a proper name and place in the colony, and at the same time bringing about a purer social condition. The fear of blackmail is natural to the culpable, but no clean-living

man in Jamaica is actuated by such a feeling ; at any rate so flimsy an objection cannot be made to stand in the way of a great legal and ethical reform. The Government itself has not regarded the proposal with any degree of favour, on account of the possibilities lying behind it, and also because of its constitutional dislike to disturb established conditions. But by its inaction it is destroying what it is endeavouring to build up in other directions. It forgets that there must be all-round development, and that it is useless to cultivate one side of the people's nature without buttressing it with collateral supports. No natural law can be broken without the consequences of its breach being incurred, and the effect of this evil is far-reaching and terrible. The profligacy it encourages is of the worst kind, and disease is so common that its presence is the rule, and health the exception, among the population as a whole. It follows that the country cannot be prosperous. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. Directly or indirectly thousands of children are annually sacrificed because they are of illegitimate birth. The vital statistics of the colony prove that a much larger number of this class die than those born in wedlock,

but no count can be made of that secret host of organisms which are not permitted to draw the breath of life. In the parishes where marriages are least common, the birth rate is lowest, and the illegitimacy and death rates highest. It is from the ranks of the fatherless children, also, that the vagrant population of the colony shoot up, and it is this population which is responsible for most of the minor crimes that harass the community. The policy by which the Government and Legislature seek to suppress these demonstrates how little they realise what is required, and how unable they are to read the lessons of the past. They enact laws of great severity and flog the delinquents. It is in vain. They seek to cure the symptom instead of the disease. They can never succeed, unless they reach down to the root of the evil and provide the simple remedy, which is to give each child born in the country a legal father. If this fundamental act of justice were conceded, the moral atmosphere would clear of itself. It is a question which the Government ought to handle ; it may be difficult and delicate, but to the upright, nation or individual, light ariseth in the darkness.

Having made a pure family life possible

and consequently provided for the foundation of a sound national existence, the next step would be to place the children, no longer nameless drift-weed, in the way of earning a proper livelihood. In Jamaica, of all countries, they form the line of least resistance to progress, and in them the hope for the future lies. A wise policy, therefore, should give attention to elementary education. The present system still depends on the good offices of the Church, and from its very nature is imperfect in organisation, and inadequate in result. It should either be improved and extended, or a National system should be adopted, with the object of securing the education of every child. There are difficulties in the way of the latter course—the cost, the lack of efficient teachers, the insufficiency of public men to constitute the Boards, and the opposition of, at least, the Roman Catholic Church ; but there is wisdom and force enough in the colony to meet these, and to establish a system which will result in the gradual and effective enlightenment of the entire juvenile population. No objection from the parents need be counted upon. With the penetration of the fruit-buyers to the interior, and the

adoption of improved means of transport, the necessity for the children being used in this service is being gradually removed. The teaching should correspond to the requirements of the race, and be simple, practical, and thorough, as far as it goes. Hitherto it has been of a simple literary character. The negro, however, does not understand that such an education is the basis of all advancement; he believes that it is the basis only of commercial and professional advancement, and the idea adds to his distaste for agricultural pursuits. He reasons that as the white does not teach him the culture of the soil it is a thing to be despised. This is a point which has usually been missed in the consideration of the question. A small beginning is being made in the schools to remedy this defect; but no code will produce satisfactory results unless it recognises in an adequate manner the common and dominant activities by which nine-tenths of the children are environed from birth to death. Secondary schools for those who are rising up from the mass should also be established or subsidised. If means are wanted to carry out so complete an educational programme, then Britain should

see that the means are provided. The local Government, however, can find money to spend on roads and bridges and ballrooms, while, on the plea of no funds, it abolishes the already small grant for building and other purposes obtained by the schools. Much has been done to augment the stock and stone and to develop the material resources of the country, but little so far has been attempted to develop the mind of its youth, which is its best resource. The ultimate source of wealth and prosperity is not public works, but the souls and bodies of men and women. All material facilities will be absolutely useless unless the capacity is present to take advantage of them. This is the sole reason why we find the negro still so insecure in his economic position, and why large numbers are constantly facing starvation, although they dwell in the midst of magnificent potentiality. A drought, low prices, failure of crops, or a hurricane, is sufficient to shift the foundation on which they rest, and reduce them to a condition in which they are neither able to help themselves nor discharge their responsibilities as citizens of the State. The remedy is to make them competent tillers of the soil and workers

in the crafts, and to implant in them habits of forethought and application and thrift.

The children, then, as they pass from the schools, should be afforded the opportunity of making the most of themselves. In each parish there should be trade and farm schools in which they would receive practical instruction in the various industries. Vagrant children should be taken up and housed in special buildings under proper care and control. What could be done in this direction is exemplified in the denominational industrial schools of the Roman Catholic body. Both boys and girls receive an ordinary elementary education, and, in addition, the girls learn straw-plaiting, straw-hat-making, house-cleaning, cooking, washing, and baking; and the boys are instructed in the cultivation of plants, afterwards being apprenticed to trades, and thus pass into the stage in which they can earn their own livelihood. There is also an orphanage, which aims at being self-sustaining, the means of support being agriculture. These institutions solve the problem how to turn the waifs and strays of the streets and roads into respectable and responsible citizens of the State. Or the vagrants could be placed on

board a training-ship in the harbour of Kingston, the best destiny for them being a life at sea. It is surprising that the Imperial authorities have not turned their attention to the tropical colonies as a recruiting-ground for the Navy. The blacks make admirable sailors, as well as soldiers, and hundreds of the vagrant lads of Jamaica might be drafted into Her Majesty's naval service, with advantage to themselves and the country.

Provision should be made for safe-guarding the future interests of those trained in the technical schools. Such as might engage in handicrafts would come under an operative apprenticeship law. Such as might choose the tillage of the soil would be kept abreast of the development of modern husbandry by means of model farms and cottage homesteads, in charge of instructors who would also give demonstrations in the field. These proposals, it may be noted, are in harmony with the aspirations of the people. They are, as we have seen, becoming more and more conscious of their ignorance and are appealing for knowledge and training. To give them theory alone is to give them a stone when they want bread. They cannot as yet grasp

abstract truth to any extent, and must actually see what they are taught. No advocacy of the lip, for instance, would have made them replace their wooden John Crow sugar mills with anything better; but after watching a small steel mill at work in the grounds of the Exhibition hundreds secured the machine, and it is now to be seen everywhere throughout the island. They require to be taken to their fields and shown how to plant and manure, graft and prune, pick and cure and pack for the market. While being thus taught they would require to be provided with an advantageous field in which to operate. The principle of moderate protection should be introduced into the tariff—the duty should be taken off the raw material, and a higher duty imposed on articles which can be produced within the island. The practice of shipping unripe and ungraded fruit should be penalised. New industries should be initiated, experimental central factories should be established, the products of the forest should be investigated, new markets should be found, and the general supervision of agriculture and trade should be undertaken by a special department. The relation of peasant and landowner requires

attention and adjustment. In some districts thousands of virgin acres are lying unoccupied ; they are practically untaxed, and the owners refuse to sell, while the negroes are multiplying and being more and more crowded into corners or forced to rent from proprietors who turn them off at will. Such lands should be acquired by the Government, and re-sold in small lots, before trenching on its own reserves, which are the capital account of the colony. This, however, is a question which has several aspects, and one is sometimes inclined to be thankful that there are properties which the negro cannot lay waste. Nomadic cultivation is in the agricultural sphere what vicious union is in the moral, and it produces equally blighting results. The blacks do not understand all the bearings of the situation, and have generally a sense of being ill-treated. The problem which the Government has to solve is to bring them and the land together on a proper basis. It should induce them to buy and cultivate their own grounds on the homestead principle. It should teach them that while there is not sufficient land to continue the present slipshod system, there is a superabundance for careful, intensive cultivation. In settling the Crown

lands it must take into consideration the fondness of the people for their homes in the valleys, and allow them to retain these for a time. By establishing a church and a school and other attractions it will gradually wean them from the old environment. Villages will then spring up, and become the scene of settled husbandry, where the lads from the farm and trade schools will find remunerative scope for the exercise of their skill and energy.

The moral law, however, is the real motive power of all progress, and the Church is its lever. The Church must continue to be regarded as the main influence engaged in the work of elevating the negroes. Their advancement throughout the Empire is commonly supposed to be due solely to the operation of British administration and British law, but this is a mistake. The history of modern civilization in its best sense has been the history of evangelisation. It is the missionary who civilizes a country. He creates the conditions that make advancement possible ; he supplies the fundamental ideas and principles upon which are built loyalty and obedience and peace. It is upon these again that the State operates. The process is unseen, because it is accomplished

down among the great deeps of character, and it is slow because no lasting basis can be laid in haste. But it is sure, and it does not, like measures and phases of civil government, come in order to pass away. At times all that has been achieved seems to have gone for nothing, overwhelmed during some paroxysm of passion, some insurrection against constituted authority; but when the waters subside the moral foundations are seen to be still there, more firmly imbedded than before. While the Church in Jamaica, therefore, is entitled to expect the factors of Government and public enterprise to do their part in promoting the secular well-being of the people, it should still be prepared to accept the largest share of responsibility. Fortunately it retains the affection of the negroes, who have not yet forgotten the claim that it has upon them. They remember that it was the missionaries who first came and gazed compassionately upon them as slaves and sought to ameliorate their lot, who gave them a vision of freedom, and ultimately wrought their deliverance, and made the vision a reality. This personal attachment to the men has accentuated their bias towards the religion taught, and they yield to it, to-day as hitherto, a

pathetic allegiance. If ever the Church loses its grip of their hearts and lives the causes will lie within itself.

Close observers are inclined to believe that these causes are now beginning to develop, and that there is need for a re-consideration of the situation. The main source of disquiet lies far distant. The people in the United Kingdom and elsewhere who support missions in the tropics have no knowledge of the conditions that act on and influence the work. They do not, for instance, realise the effect of climate on character and physique. If a missionary remains long at his post it is counted to his honour, whereas it is usually to the dishonour of the service in which he is engaged. We repeat what has been already written—that prolonged and continuous residence in the lax environment of the tropics impairs the moral part of a man. Its sharp edge is slowly but surely worn down before the perpetual impact of hot lethargy and careless vice. One cannot live for years among the indecencies of life without becoming more tolerant of them. Gradually the capacity for the highest service disappears, and eventually spiritual atrophy supervenes. As with individuals, so it is with

denominations. To those acquainted on the spot with the inner history of the churches it is a marvel that they succeed so well as they do. One reason is, perhaps, to be found in the nature of the material dealt with. The negroes, as a rule, are not sufficiently educated to discern differences of level in the higher reaches of character ; neither can they readily discriminate between the false and the true. A moral man without spirituality satisfies them as well as a saint. They feel, indeed, more in touch with the former. As their supreme need is ethical example and teaching, they probably receive as much good from the association as they can assimilate in their present stage. No missionary, nevertheless, can make an ultimate success of himself and his cause unless there burns behind the morality the flame of Divine enthusiasm and love. When that dies low the quality of his teaching may in a measure suffice, but the lack of the vital essence tells in a subtle and remote way along the entire range of his influence. We cannot lay the blame altogether on the missionaries. There is not now the stimulating interest attached to the work which it had in the earlier days of the century. It is much the same in its nature

as that of the ministers at home—a physical routine which exhausts the body, and personal relations which exhaust the heart. But the conditions are as opposite as the poles. The tropical worker toils in heat and glare and sweat and fever the twelve months round without a break, and so on year after year. He cannot always continue doing and giving his best under such circumstances. He is bound to deteriorate. Denominations whose ministers obtain no holiday show least genuine vitality, while bodies, like the Presbyterian, whose ministers have an occasional furlough, are the strongest. Their strength is not due to this fact alone, but it is a contributory cause. The imperative need for all is a visit at regular intervals to the centres of robust civilization, in order to bring themselves up to that standard which is so necessary to accomplish the ends they have in view. Unless this can be arranged for, the churches as a whole will not advance as they otherwise would do.

Again, it is clear that the method of development of a primitive race is not generally understood at home. Results are expected long before results can possibly be obtained. There has always been a disposition to force

the churches into independence, and to withdraw the white missionaries and replace them by black and coloured men educated in the colony. We have seen that the Baptists adopted this course soon after Emancipation. The English connection now simply supports the local college for the training of teachers and pastors. The Wesleyans were soon after practically severed from the home body. Then the Government disestablished the Church of England, which became self-governing. The Congregationalists were the next to be thrown on their own resources. The Moravians are gradually being cast adrift after a record of one hundred and forty years. For some time the Presbyterians in Scotland pressed for further self-maintenance, and steadily decreased their contributions. A deputation which recently visited the colony returned, however, with convictions entirely opposed to those which had previously been held, and the result has been a strengthening of the bond between the home Church and the Mission, while the native door has been made slightly more difficult to enter. This general tendency towards autonomy is largely the outcome of the attitude adopted by the mission boards and committees

in the mother countries. It is stated that to go on contributing to long-established missions is inimical to the policy of expansion, and by reducing expenses in these centres funds are set free for pioneer work in new countries. It is also alleged that the contributing public take no interest in settled spheres, and that they like to have their imaginations set on flame by recitals of perilous adventure among savage tribes, the cause which is most sensational in this respect drawing the largest amount of money. Such a spirit and such procedure are fatal to true evangelisation, and in Jamaica the effects are now being widely experienced. It is estimated that two-thirds of the population come within the reach or influence of religious agencies, the remainder living in a moral darkness almost as profound, and in surroundings quite as primitive, as can be found in Africa. The Churches have absorbed all the raw material which their meagre resources will allow, and upon this they are patiently working. They are in the transitional and most critical stage. Their members are emerging from barbarism and occupy the dangerous ledge which divides it from permanent Christianisation. Their foothold is far from being secure,

and any modification of the methods which have brought them to this point will have the effect of plunging them back into the aboriginal slough. It is the law of the tropics. They cannot be expected to do what the white does not succeed in achieving without contact with a bracing and stimulating force. As in the political sphere, they must have careful guardianship until they are able to shift for themselves, and the stronger and wiser the supervision the sooner this result will be obtained. Responsibility should be conceded very slowly. The people are advancing, but not so rapidly as the religious public at home believe. The black and coloured catechists and ministers do not possess the inherited character of the white nor do they obtain the same severe training. When put to the test in matters of management and finance and morality they frequently fail, and a few cases of inviolate loyalty to principle do not justify the concession of general trust and power. Think of their position. They are stationed among sensuous conditions to which every fibre of their being, every thought and feeling, instinctively respond, as the result of centuries of habit. To grant them unrestricted liberty is unjust both to themselves and to the

cause they serve. Hence the blunder being committed in the adoption of a scheme for the evangelisation of Africa by means of negroes from the West Indies. These cannot be trusted in their own sphere, where they have the advantage of white association and superintendence, and it is not possible that they can be successful in the still lower and less disciplined environment of Africa. The time will come when they will be available for the purpose, but at present the experiment is hazardous and likely to end in disappointment and failure. The best types also are required as examples in their own land and among their neighbours, and as yet they are too few to be spared. The evolution of a high character and development in the direction of independence are, of course, inevitable, but the time when the process shall be fully consummated is so remote that no thought meantime need be taken in anticipation of it. Even then, according to natural law as we know it, the Churches must continue to look, for moral stimulus and strength, to sources outside of the equatorial area.

The main consideration however which escapes the notice of the home public is that the bulk of the black population, who form the

chief stay of the ecclesiastical organisations, are in no better position to support them than they were fifty years ago. While the funds from abroad have been gradually decreasing, the giving power of the congregations has remained the same, and during years of depression the missionaries, instead of receiving offerings, are compelled in sheer humanity to distribute money and food and clothing to many of their people. Numerous white pastors with wives and families scarcely earn a living wage, and are in consequence forced into debt and privation. There are cultured men to-day who labour in field and garden in order to raise the root-food and other articles they cannot afford to buy—an expedient all the harder to resort to, as it minimises their influence among the negroes. These despise a white man, and especially a minister, who toils with his own hands for the necessities of life. How some contrive to live and send their children to be educated abroad is one of the mysteries of European existence in the tropics. The local white public give them little support, and not being in touch with their work, know nothing of its conditions. To the few behind the scenes cases of devotion and self-sacrifice are

constantly being revealed, and if the British people desire to be thrilled with narratives of heroism they should inform themselves of what goes on within the manses and rectories of Jamaica. All, however, are not purified and ennobled by the struggle. There are some whom it degrades and spoils for spiritual work, and on the whole the tendency is to decrease the value of the Churches as evangelising agencies. In proportion to the time that has elapsed since the process of severance began, or was completed, and the extent of the severance, so, as a rule, is the inefficiency of the body.

There is another and more obscure but still grave danger in the situation which it may be well to bring to light. Owing to the struggle of the Churches to exist there is a perpetual demand made on the people for money. The pastors may not like it—many do not—but the appeals are necessary if they are to live. A considerable number of those who attend the services are girls, and offertory envelopes and collecting books are put into their hands to raise funds for ordinary or special purposes. The principle of the system may be all that is right, but in the desire to

compete with others, and collect large amounts, the collectors often solicit promiscuously, and have been known to meet with, and respond to, counter solicitations of the worst character. It must be remembered that with many there is as yet no vital connection between morality and piety. The whole question of the position and prospects of the Churches to-day is a serious one. It is clear that the people are not yet in a position to maintain them on a satisfactory basis, and until they have, as a race, advanced to a higher industrial stage they ought not to be expected to meet the responsibility. A mission Church should not depend for its usefulness and very existence on the phases of a climate, and the missionary should not have his stipend paid in barrels of coffee, pigs and fowls, or labour; nor should it be cut down when it is already in arrears, nor should life in a country where expenses are twice as high as in the Mother Country be turned into a fight with poverty and anxiety and debt. There is very little hope that the public at home will realise the nature of the situation, and the only circumstance which may call attention to it will be the collapse of one or more of the organisations. Their general amalgamation

on the basis of a simple creed without much dogma or ceremonial would probably result in a more economical arrangement and a greater degree of usefulness. Such a scheme is well within the range of practical solution, the existing divisions being maintained by the ministers and heads of the denominations, and not by the people, who are, on the whole, unable to distinguish between the opposing doctrines and merely accept the cardinal points common to them all.

Above and beyond all requirements it is necessary that there should subsist in the community a spirit of racial good-will. Without this all reform will be useless. In recent years self-interest and common-sense have combined to reduce the antagonism between the various classes. If we have to live together, they say to themselves, we may as well make the best of it. But such a spirit is not the most satisfactory basis for the upbuilding of the social structure as an organised and independent whole; this can only be found in an intelligent submission to the great facts of tropical existence. It is not to be expected that a recognition of the natural laws which govern their relations will subdue the elemental prejudices

of birth and education, but it will help to lessen the friction of that intercourse which is so inevitable and so constant. Upon the whites, as the superior race, lies the greatest responsibility in this respect. It is their attitude and influence that determine the character of the life and progress of the negroes, and they should justify their position and power by endeavouring to uplift the race. The normal feeling at present is one of simple tolerance, and they are more ready to flash up into resentment at the slightest sign of presumption than to make any effort to train and educate what is so manifestly raw and ignorant. But no white man is ever insulted who is just and keeps his temper. It is a marvel how long the negro will suffer ill-treatment; the ability, the power, the superiority of the white, all the qualities that are absent in himself, awe and cow him. When to these, then, are added the finer manifestations of sympathy and rational kindness and patience he becomes so docile and pliable that almost anything can be made of him. In these circumstances the duty of the white is clear.

Turning to the negro himself, it is obvious that the majority have still no proper conception of their position in the world, and the con-

ditions that govern their progress. They will be all the better when they have. They have nothing to be ashamed of in their lowly origin. The whites have passed through the same stage, and it is not the negroes' fault that they fell in at the rear of human progress. Their duty is frankly to accept all that this position involves. To do so is to solve their destiny. It will give them a fresh starting-point, an ambition, a goal. They will perceive the course stretching far out in front of them, and be aware of what they have to encounter and overcome before they arrive, and they will conclude that, with them, as with all other members of the human family, the race will be to the swift and the battle to the strong. It may also serve to modify that rudeness and occasional insolence of demeanour which corresponds so ill with their attainments and social status. This manner is, no doubt, the expression of a sore self-consciousness, or assumed in self-defence to meet a contempt they have learned by experience to anticipate. They should know, however, that they can always be gentlemen, although some of their racial superiors are boors, and that a respectful and dignified manner, without servility, will serve

them better than all the knowledge and treasure they can acquire. Perhaps no better advice can be given them than that penned by one of their own race: "I am a black negro, and one to my backbone," he writes from the same St. Thomas of dark memory. "For nearly sixty years I have had to do with both colours, and, unless I am dim-sighted or ignorant, I have not yet seen where the white man is our enemy. I can assure every black man that he has far more interested and better friends in the white man than in his own colour. He is our example, adviser, and chief support. Let every black man work for himself, save his money, live uprightly and straightforwardly, and he will never see cause to raise the war-cry of 'colour for colour,' but find that his best friends are the whites."

The coloured members of the population are more uncertain factors. There are many, both men and women, who have come apparently from good stock, are attractive in character, and altogether blameless; but we write of the majority. Belonging to neither race, incapable of the racial independence and dignity that come naturally alike to white and black, with an unstable and elusive nature, it is

difficult always to know what turn their relations will take. They are, as a rule, hostile to the British official system, their motto being "Jamaica for the Jamaicans," by whom they mean themselves. Their idea of the situation is that Britain maintains her colonial possessions specially to provide offices for her needy sons. They appear intellectually unable to conceive that the presence of the British officials is the result of native inefficiency. It is alleged that there are local men sufficiently competent to fill the highest posts, but we find that their qualifications are measured by the local and tropical standard, which, needless to say, is not the standard of the British Islands. As a matter of fact, there is no bar to the advancement of a capable Creole of any class, and the majority of the officers now in the Civil Service are native-born. It may, however, be pointed out that practically all the irregularities that occur are committed by the latter, and that almost all the improvements which have civilized the country have been the direct result of imported intelligence. What the members of the mixed community require is a revelation of their great weakness. The majority have never left the island, and the position they take

up is largely due to ignorance. Those who go abroad become wise. If not mortified by their experiences, they seldom fail to be chastened and subdued by the majesty and might they witness there. Some who have been thus educated are as liberal and enlightened as the sanest white, and it is in the increase of these that there is promise for the future.

To sum up, the paramount necessity for all classes is a realisation of their relative limitations and possibilities. Congregated in a circumscribed sphere, every individual and interest dependent on the other, all links in a great chain of activity, it is madness to create and foster conditions that will lead to the domination of racial passion. At present all sections live side by side without undue friction, but a clearer outlook upon the laws that regulate their existence will assist in reconciling the differences which still obtain, and in imparting to the community, as a whole, that mutual sympathy of relation and solidarity of aim and action which form the real strength and hope of a nation.

CHAPTER X.

THE WORLD OUTLOOK.

OUR study of the negro of Jamaica has, we think, supplied an answer to all the questions which it is customary to ask concerning the race. As we glance back over the history of the colony for the past sixty years we perceive a people gradually struggling up from a basis of barbarism to the plane of an orderly and intelligent civilization. Through the maze of antagonistic forces which come into view we can trace the thin white thread of evolution. And what is true of the negro of Jamaica is true of the negro as a whole. The evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that he is not a terminal point among the projections of the higher species, but is fundamentally equal with the white man. He possesses all the potential qualities that have been realised in the latter, as the latter retains the vestigial instincts which can drag him back to his aboriginal state. He

is capable, therefore, of social development along independent lines. That he does not voluntarily demonstrate this power is due to the accident of his environment, to the simple physical phenomenon of temperature. The same condition acts with similar effect on the white, who, however, is able in a greater or less degree to conquer it by the force of his inherited energy and culture. This does not imply that the negro has no native initiative. It merely indicates that, like the white, he requires to be in a position favourable for its operation. Where he occupies such a position, where, for instance, the stimulus of a higher human factor takes the place of climate, he begins at once to put out shoots of effort and character. Nor does it imply that it is impossible for him to advance by himself. There is no proof that he would not be able to do so if he were an inhabitant of a colder region. It is reasonable to infer that he would evolve there in course of time as the white has done. In Jamaica it is the negro settler on the cool mountains who has reached the highest stage of development. But no positive evidence on the point is now likely to be obtained. The territorial limit of the race has been set.

Other peoples are filling up the unoccupied spaces of the earth, and in the nature of things the negro race must remain imprisoned in the equatorial zone, and there work out its destiny with only such changes in the immemorial circumstances as the result of the growth of the white man in the spaces beyond may bring. In consequence of this natural disadvantage the negro occupies a special position in the world, and he requires special treatment if he is to make the best progress possible in the circumstances. He is a child. He has all the latent qualities of the man, but in the meantime he must be regarded as the babe of humanity. Wherever the adult race has recognised this fact, and the right relation has, however imperfectly, been established, he has made satisfactory progress in attainment. And in the process it has been shown that there is no inherent antipathy between the two races ; that on the contrary they can live side by side without friction, when their relative situations are acknowledged and accepted, as rich and poor, and illiterate and educated, live side by side in white countries. There was, therefore, no justification for the system of slavery as it existed in the past, and there is no ground for despising

the negro now, or for despairing of his elevation in the future.

He cannot now, however, be left to himself. The nations are pressing in upon him on every side, and he is making his presence more and more felt in the world. Vast numbers are being brought into daily contact with higher forces, and developing a knowledge of their position and numerical power. In the West Indies and the United States they are reading newspapers and books, and considering attentively what is said and written about them by the white man. The outlook, it must be admitted, is not reassuring. In many respects the tendencies at work are making for the alienation of the two races and their division into great hostile camps. On the one hand we have the whites, half of them still regarding the negroes as sub-human, and utilising them as such, the other half unwilling to go so far, yet puzzling over their existence and speculating as to their fate. On the other hand, we have the negroes everywhere watching the white with apprehensive gaze. In Africa they are startled and uneasy at the developments going on around them ; in the West Indies they are still haunted by a sense of strange possibilities ; in the United

States they are tormented and embittered by the actual antagonism of a powerful people. It is this which constitutes the negro problem. The present semi-pacific conditions cannot last. The negroes will go on learning about themselves and the world, and they will more and more be forced into a posture of self-defence and a policy of retaliation. The disastrous results of such a relation are already being witnessed in the United States. Many persons realise the danger, and seek anxiously for some solution. We find curious proposals sometimes made to bring about the desired result, but the real solution is a simple and natural one. It consists merely in a recognition by each race of its position and duties, followed in daily life by the practical application of the principles involved. As far as human foresight can range into the future there is no prospect of the negro being successful in elevating his own race within the limits of the tropics. There is, indeed, no certain prospect of Creole rule of any kind being able to induce the uninterrupted social progress of tropical communities. Their advancement is conditioned on the amount and quality of the ethical force introduced from the temperate zone. If the negro is to attain to

the highest degree of efficiency it is possible for him to reach in the special circumstances of his existence, he must submit to be controlled and guided by the white. This submissive relation is as essential for his proper development as submission to a parent or guardian or elder brother is essential for the development of a child. In the nature of things, however, the chief obligation rests upon the white. He is literally the elder brother of the negro. It is his prerogative to initiate the better understanding which is necessary, and to undertake the associated duties. Patiently, resolutely, thoroughly, the mind of the negro must be educated, his hand trained, and all his activities guided into a healthy and progressive course.

Is it possible to secure this tactful and compassionate direction? We know how little the white has hitherto cared for the negro. He has treated him harshly and more like a dog than a human being. It was, no doubt, easy to glide into this position in the past when the ethical sense was but feebly developed in man as a whole. But white humanity is itself evolving. A consciousness of the general brotherhood of man is growing, and the practical virtues of Christianity are becoming more

dominant everywhere. It does not now require a rarely sympathetic imagination and an exceptional tenderness of nature to deal rightly with the weak and barbarous who come across our path. As the average white now sojourns among the negroes, and gets to know them intimately, all other feelings become gradually merged into one of profound pity for a race so ignorant and helpless, so much the victims of circumstances. This feeling is gradually superseding the old brutal sentiment, and making it practicable for a new relation to be established, leading directly to the moral and mental elevation of the race. If the real nature of the situation and its requirements were brought home to the whites, high and low, throughout the world, it is possible that the responsibility would be accepted, and the task discharged as one discharges a trust. It is not, after all, so difficult a task as many, with imperfect knowledge, imagine. The fact that the negro is a child in racial character cannot be too clearly realised. He has no skin of nationality to cast; he has never had a nationality. There are no great artificial evils in his social nature to be rooted out with disturbance of the whole organic system. All his customs and beliefs lie on the

surface. So ready is he to yield to the pressure of the good in the sphere above him that within a few generations in Jamaica, where the conditions have not been of the best, he has lost almost all touch with the influences to which he was subjected in his old environment. Instead of dying off before civilization, he grows stronger as he comes within its best influences. And the process of advancement is rapid, differing, for an obvious reason, from that of the whites. These fought for their own hand in the long upward struggle, but the blacks possess the advantage of another and experienced hand fighting with them and for them. They understand this quite well. The intelligent members of the race especially are under no illusion as to its position ; they admit sadly its ignorance, its stupidity, its sin. They are aware of its inability to rise without contact with a higher force ; and when they are sure the whites come with pure intent, and confidence has been established, they willingly fall into a teachable attitude, and are eager to learn and to make the most of their opportunities as their eyes open to perceive them. They know that for them, of all races, the path to achievement lies, not through revolution and blood, but along the

patient ways of industry, education and character. It is for this reason that those who are able to make the comparison at all exhibit a passionate preference for the British rule, because, with all its blunderings, it surrounds them with liberty and justice and peace. The negroes of Jamaica have no desire for the confused licence of Hayti. From their quiet homes they look across the sea-passage to the black Republic as at some wild animal safely caged for which in its periodical spasms they entertain merely a curious pity. Their real desire is for a simple and practical policy that will allow them room to develop without taking away the stimulus to effort and the reward of success.

In these circumstances the duty of the white race is unmistakable. It is to uplift and mould into a responsible and progressive people the black humanity lying about its feet. The task is one specially for statesmen and legislators and all in authority. These, it is true, have many more interesting matters to engross their attention: questions of statecraft, the expansion of trade, the conquest of territory, and what not; but the work of elevating the negro will not be without

reward. The material advantage to be gained need not be overlooked. To educate and train the negro is to enter into a remunerative commercial investment. It is to increase his economic status, to expand his desires, and to multiply his material requirements. To satisfy these he must draw on the nation to which he is attached, and as his development proceeds his purchasing power will undergo a corresponding enlargement, and the more profitable will become his demands. The negro race is, in fact, one of the greatest potential markets in the world. But the exploitation of this market will not attract the best minds that govern humanity. The moral and intellectual advancement of the race will be their aim. Hand in hand with the religious forces of the time they will seek the conquest of mind. Here also success cannot fail to be secured. There need be no appeal to fancy in the endeavour to anticipate the result of the operation of the policy that has been outlined. The logic of evolution leads to the irresistible conclusion. We have seen what has been achieved in Jamaica. We have seen a dumb, abject mass emerge from the slough of animalism and rise into a bright and

aspiring, but still backward and voiceless, community. We are justified, therefore, in believing that under better conditions still better results would everywhere be obtained. We should see growing up in these beautiful tropical lands a people with a genius and career of their own, no longer a voiceless multitude, but one vocal in the happiness and effort of a responsible existence, the industrious and thrifty owners of golden soil, yet content with the calm attainment of modest well-being, and honouring in all the phases of their simple lives the commands of the Gospel which set them free. To Britain, chiefly, the prospect appeals. It has the social destiny of millions in its power. It can either keep them in the dust or raise them to the heights. They can either be suffered to stand aloof, the despised and rejected of the nation, or made to throw themselves into the broad life of the Empire as they now throw themselves with incomparable fidelity into the lives of individual families. The issue is clear and the time for decision is ripe.

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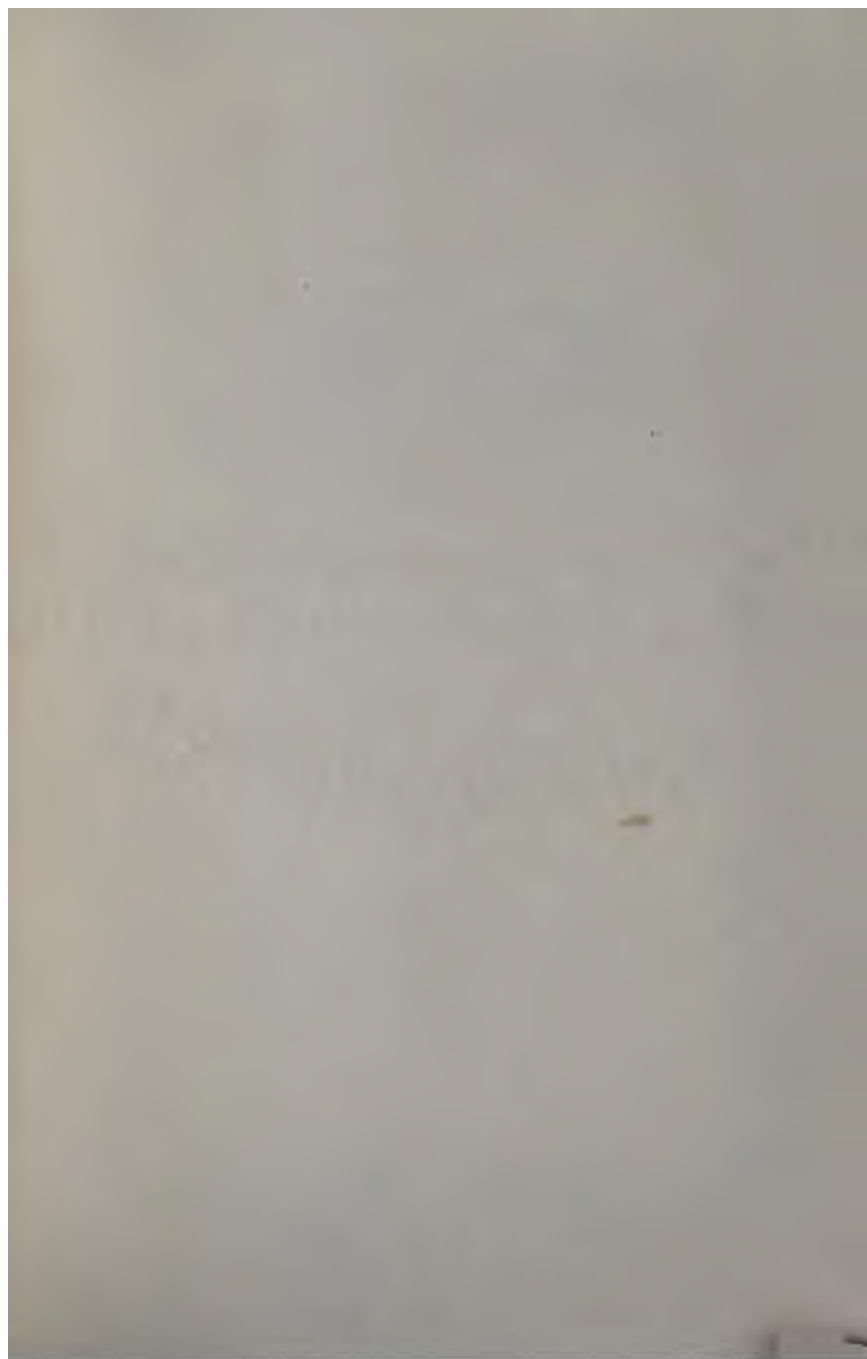
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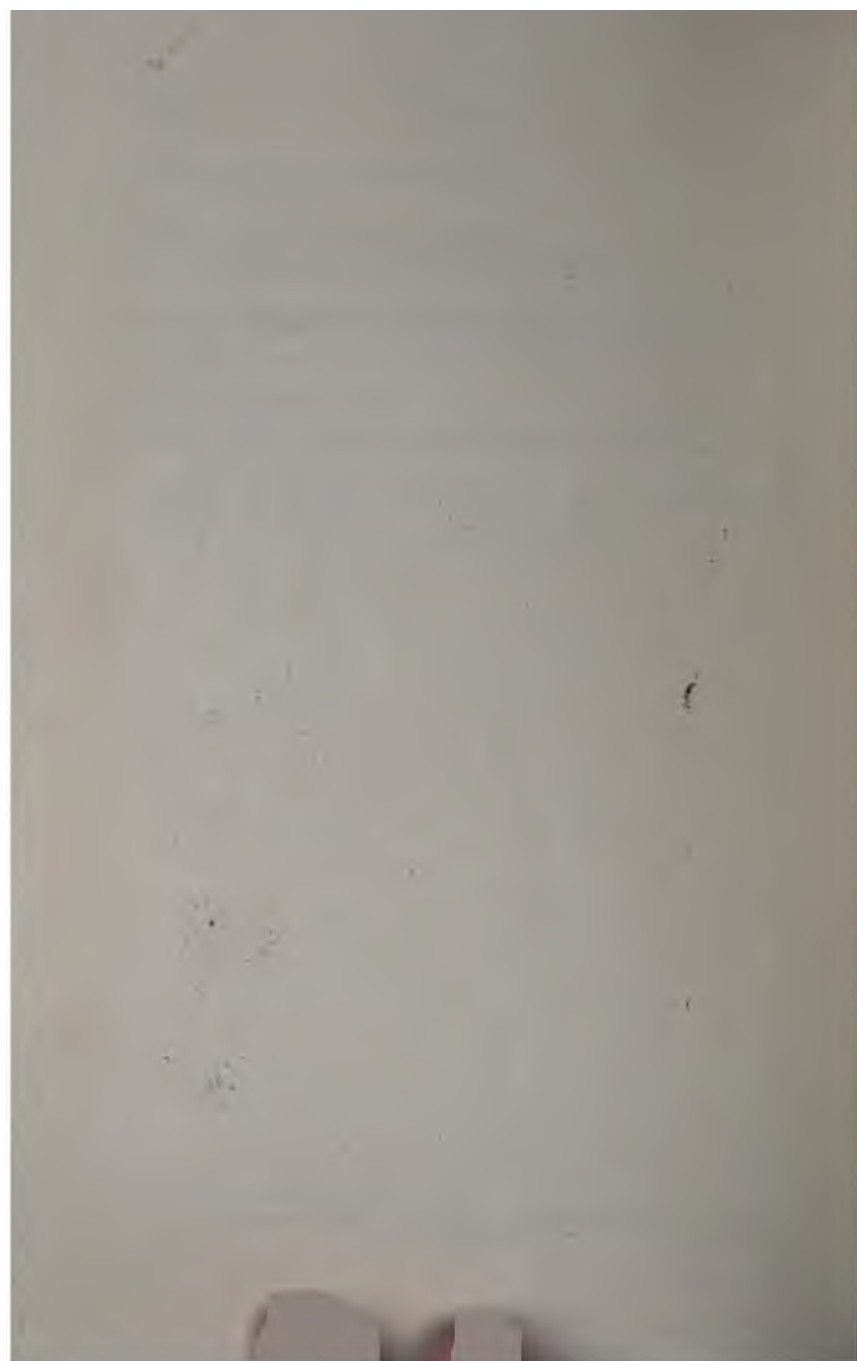
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